March 8, 2024

Ottawa Public Library

Research Report

INTENT

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1.0—Executive Summary

Ottawa Public Library (OPL) serves Canada's capital city of one million residents through 33 physical branches, three book mobiles, a virtual channel, home delivery service, and a vending machine style lending service. It is the second largest public library service in Ontario (after Toronto). OPL has innovative programs for people of all ages, extensive collections, including among the largest French language resources in Canada, and is committed to its mission to inspire learning, spark curiosity and connect people.

OPL has never had a formalized brand strategy, and the current visual identity is more than 20 years old. We are undergoing a brand redevelopment process to ensure authentic representation for OPL today and for the future. This project includes extensive community and stakeholder engagement as an opportunity to learn how Active Users and Non-Users perceive OPL, whether there are gaps in people's understanding of what OPL offers the community, and how the library can increase awareness and usage.

This project is divided into three phases:

1. Research and Discovery
2. Strategy and Development
3. Design and Visual Identity

This report summarizes the findings of the Research and Discovery phase that will inform the following phases of the project.

1.1—Objectives

Our goal for this research process is to answer the following questions:

- How is OPL perceived? (see audiences below)
- Where are the perceived gaps in messaging and understanding of OPL and its services?
  - As a brand
  - As a service provider
  - As a community hub
- What is OPL doing well?

1.2—Audiences

Internal

- Library Staff
- Management
- The OPL Board

External

General Public

Public—Active Users

For the purpose of this Research Report, an 'Active User' is defined as:

- Anyone who has used Ottawa Public Library in-person or online within the last year
  - Includes both cardholders and non-cardholders

Public—Non-Users

- Anyone who has not used Ottawa Public Library in-person or online within the last year
  - Includes both cardholders and non-cardholders

Note

Throughout this report, we refer to Active Users as simply 'Users', as well as the term 'Library Users' in some instances.

1.3—Methodology

To gather as much information as possible, Intent has engaged OPL's audiences in the following ways:

Internal Engagement

Workshops

Workshops are designed to uncover how OPL's brand is viewed and what makes OPL unique. Through a combination of exercises and discussions, our workshops allowed participants to speak candidly about what makes OPL unique and how they'd like to see OPL represented in the future.

OPL selected the participants for the workshops with recommendations from Intent to include both new and long-standing staff and managers at OPL. Intent completed the following workshops:

- 2 managers workshops (March 23 and March 31, 2023) 33 attendees total
- 3 staff workshops (April 5, April 6, and April 19, 2023) 52 attendees total

Individual Interviews

Intent completed fifteen interviews with members of the Board and senior management. In these individual interviews, Intent initiated conversations about their connections who do not use the library and why, providing insights into Non-User behaviours.

Staff Survey

A staff survey available in French and English from July 17 to October 4, 2023, was distributed to all staff and received 408 responses—a staff response rate of 65% . The goal was to learn how staff think, feel, and talk about the OPL brand and culture to inform strategic recommendations in phase two. The survey included 23 questions. Response options were randomized by the survey platform (SurveyMonkey) per respondent, except in cases of Yes/No questions, or questions with a rating matrix. The staff survey was available as an online survey only.

External Engagement

Individual Interviews

Using its contact list, OPL identified community organizations that had a city-wide focus and represented the marginalized groups as identified by the City's equity lens. OPL contacted these community organizations to gauge their interest in participating in this process, in addition to determining if their clients could be engaged in the process. OPL connected Intent with six organizations who had agreed to set up an interview, with four of these organizations responding to Intent. Ultimately, Intent had conversations with five individuals from the four community organizations to gain insight on OPL from a community perspective and the infrequent use of the library by their clients. In addition, this was an opportunity to learn how Intent could facilitate focus groups or interviews with their clients if needed during the process.

As a value-added activity, Intent also spoke with four individuals (Ottawa residents) who are Non-Users of the library—two university students and a retired couple. These interviews were conducted spontaneously at the airport while people were waiting for their delayed flights.

Public Survey

An English and French survey was available from October 3 to November 10, 2023, with the aim of better understanding the relationship between Ottawa residents and Ottawa Public Library, which will in turn inform the forthcoming brand strategy. The survey was made up of three components: The first section asked 18 questions of all respondents, the last of which identified respondents as either 'Active Users'—those who have visited OPL online or in person within the last 12 months, and 'Non-Users'—those who have not visited OPL online or in person within the last 12 months. The second section asked different questions of Active Users and Non-Users and was made up of seven questions for Active Users and ten for Non-Users. A final section of ten demographic questions was asked to all respondents. Response options were randomized by the survey platform (then known as Checkmaket, now known as Medallia) per respondent, except in cases of Yes/No questions, or questions with a rating matrix. Public surveys were available online and in paper format.

18,243 people completed the survey. It was important to monitor participation response rate, and reach representation proportional to the demographics of Ottawa. The following demographic groups were identified as historically hard-to-reach by OPL:

- Racialized persons (32%)
- Francophones (13%)
- Indigenous (3%)
- Immigrants (26%)

All percentages above represent census Canada data for those demographics within the City of Ottawa, and were targets for this public survey.

2.0—Internal Engagement

2.1—Overview

The following section outlines all findings from our extensive internal stakeholder engagement process which included workshops and individual interviews with OPL staff, management, and Board members, as well as a survey that was issued to OPL staff and management. This section is broken up into five sections:

2.2—Key Interview and Workshop Themes

This section outlines common themes that were consistent in at least three interviews and/ or workshops based on discussions about the value of OPL, its strengths and weaknesses.

These interviews and workshops also uncovered how the Board, management and staff feel OPL is perceived by the community. We see these themes and perceptions as key areas to consider to help guide the brand strategy.

Connection

OPL provides a place for people to connect with one another
A strong theme validated in the management and staff workshops, and in the Board interviews.

Providing resources that allow connections to knowledge/information
Validated in the staff workshops and interviews. Members of the Board also expressed access to resources as a benefit of OPL.

Providing connections to further community services
This point was validated during the staff workshops and interviews. Staff see the valuable connections being made daily; this was called a "lifeline" for some people.

Access

Free and equitable access for everyone
Validated in the management workshops and in the Board interviews. Staff were consistently in agreement that having free access to resources, programming and opportunities to connect with other people was an integral benefit of OPL. Many said that it was OPL's #1 value proposition or benefit.

Community

OPL is central to creating a community
This was seen as important to internal stakeholders, both when users are physically inside the library and when not. The Board highlighted community connections; one member feels OPL should be more embedded within the community—in the physical branches and having staff presence in the community, in addition to providing relevant digital services. Further, management and staff indicated that OPL provides a sense of belonging by meeting the needs of the community. Staff feel that each branch is reflective and responsive to the community it serves.

Addressing social isolation
Staff told us OPL works to meet this need in the community. One Board member noted this as a priority, asking how OPL can determine the services people need for social connection.

Intellectual freedom

Intellectual freedom is a cornerstone of OPL
Intellectual freedom, and its connection to knowledge is a key theme, particularly in an era of misinformation, distrust in institutions, the

rise of social media influencers, and decline in traditional journalism. This was a strong internal theme, a source of pride for management and staff which was validated in the staff and management workshops. In the Board interviews, members also spoke about intellectual freedom in libraries being a public place that exists to "enhance democracy and express democratic ideals and values."

2.3—Perceptions of OPL

In the internal workshops and one-on-one interviews, Intent asked stakeholders how they thought OPL was perceived by their clients and the public. The following captures the themes that emerged from these discussions.

OPL has an opportunity to build awareness and usage

People don't think of OPL/The organization isn't top of mind
In the management workshop and the Board interviews, stakeholders expressed that they are excited and proud of the work OPL is doing. Overall, they feel "frustrated" at times because they believe OPL is "underused" to its full extent because the public may not fully be aware of what OPL offers; one member saying that OPL is "not on the radar." Staff, management and the Board share the sentiment that once people come in the doors and see what OPL offers, they will become more regular users of the library.

OPL is perceived as stodgy and bureaucratic
This was validated strongly in the staff workshop with participants saying OPL is perceived as "old and dated," "slow moving" and "risk averse" because Ottawa is a "political town." However, staff know there is innovation taking place at OPL and are interested in conveying this message to the public. Staff want the public to have a greater awareness of what OPL offers.

People don't know about OPL's services and programs
OPL needs to better inform the community that there is an alternative to purchasing media, and that OPL has a wide array of services, programs and resources that the general public may not know about (i.e., audiobooks, ebooks, video games, etc.) This sentiment was validated in the management workshops, interviews, as well as in the staff workshop and interviews. Staff and management feel that OPL needs to be more "fun" when communicating what OPL offers to entice more people to come.

Lack of focus on clients as distinct demographic groups

OPL doesn't segment its audiences nor tailor its communications to them individually.
This was a theme from the management and staff workshops, as well as the Board interviews. All three groups highlighted the need for targeting seniors, newcomers and teenagers. Three Board members also discussed in-depth the need to "know our clients and prospective clients" by working with them to "get a sense of their interests" and showing these groups "what OPL offers."

OPL and the City of Ottawa

OPL is linked very closely to the City of Ottawa visual identity
This was not necessarily seen as a good or bad thing, but simply a fact. When discussing the visual identity with staff, management and the Board, it was pointed out in most instances that OPL's current visual identity is linked to the City—obviously in name, but also in its logo design and communications.

2.4—Results and analysis of the staff survey

Overview

Total Responses

408 Staff responses
65% Response rate

Legend

Multiple Choice

The question allowed for only one possible response.

Checkboxes

The question could have multiple responses selected. Where indicated, the number of responses was limited to a set number (i.e. "Check your top three answers").

Written Response

The respondent was asked to write in a response to this question. A written response could be combined with a Checkbox response, in the case of questions with "Other (please specify)" as an option.

Ratings Matrix

Respondents were asked to evaluate one or more criteria (ex. "The quality of service provided by OPL staff") using the same ratings scale (ex. Good/Somewhat Good/Somewhat Poor/Poor). Only one possible rating per criteria was allowed.
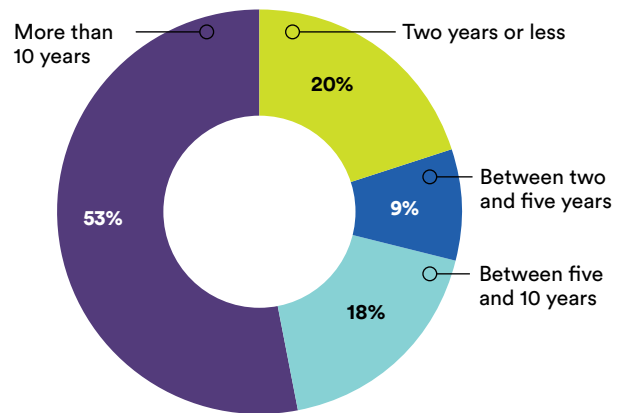
Note

Percentages within Charts and Graphs

The charts and graphs illustrated below represent only the responses to that specific question, not percentages associated with the total number of respondents since not all survey respondents answered all questions. Each question includes the total number of responses each question received, represented as 'N'.

Questions

1. How long have you worked at OPL?

Multiple Choice (N = 408)

More than 10 years — 53%
Two years or less — 20%
Between two and five years — 9%
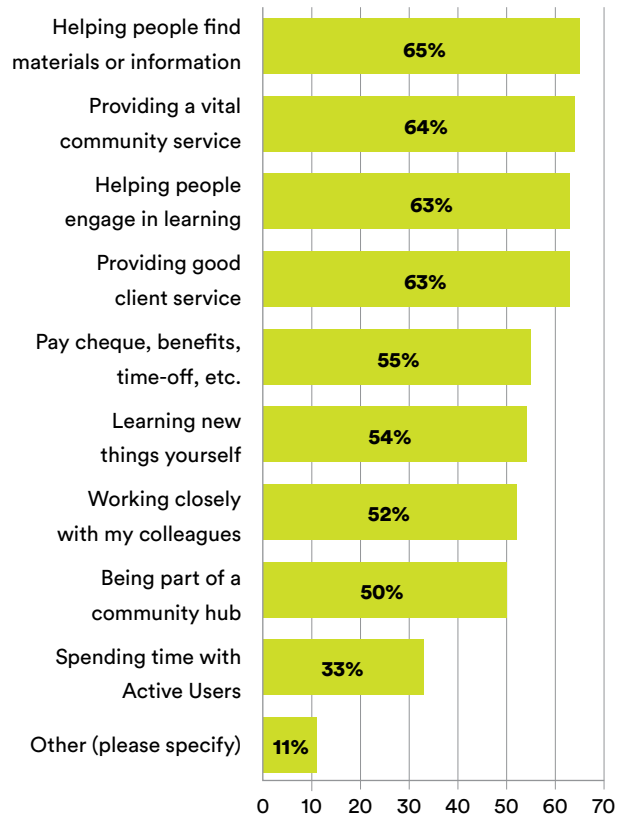Between five and 10 years — 18%

Analysis

Ottawa Public Library has an exceptional staff retention rate based on this survey, with more than 70% of respondents having worked at OPL for more than five years. We are pleased to know that so many staff members stay for extended periods of time, as any future brand is sure to be adopted by an already deeply embedded staff community.

2. What excites you most about working at OPL?

Checkboxes (Check all that apply);
Written Response (N = 408)

Helping people find materials or information	65%
Providing a vital community service	64%
Helping people engage in learning	63%
Providing good client service	63%
Pay cheque, benefits, time-off, etc.	55%
Learning new things yourself	54%
Working closely with my colleagues	52%
Being part of a community hub	50%
Spending time with Active Users	33%
Other (please specify)	11%

Analysis

Based on these responses, as well as the written responses from staff, there is a clear interest in helping community members engage with and learn from library materials. As an interesting contradiction, staff seem to indicate that while they're enthused about helping clients, they are not as excited by spending time with them.

In addition to the checkbox answers, this question received 43 written responses. There was no real theme or through-line across these responses, which varied substantially and ranged from personal ("libraries have been a part of my whole life so being able to work in one is a dream come

true"), to political ("Libraries are essential for a healthy democracy…"), to reiterations of existing possible responses ("Helping community").

3. Without looking it up, what is OPL's Mission?

Written Response (N = 323)

Ottawa Public Library's mission is to inspire learning, spark curiosity, and connect people.

33 respondents (~10%) correctly identified all three elements (included in this group were respondents who were close without getting the exact wording, i.e., "inspire learning, spark curiosity, and connect the community").

Most respondents (299, or 92%) correctly identified at least one element. With the following breakdown for the individual elements:
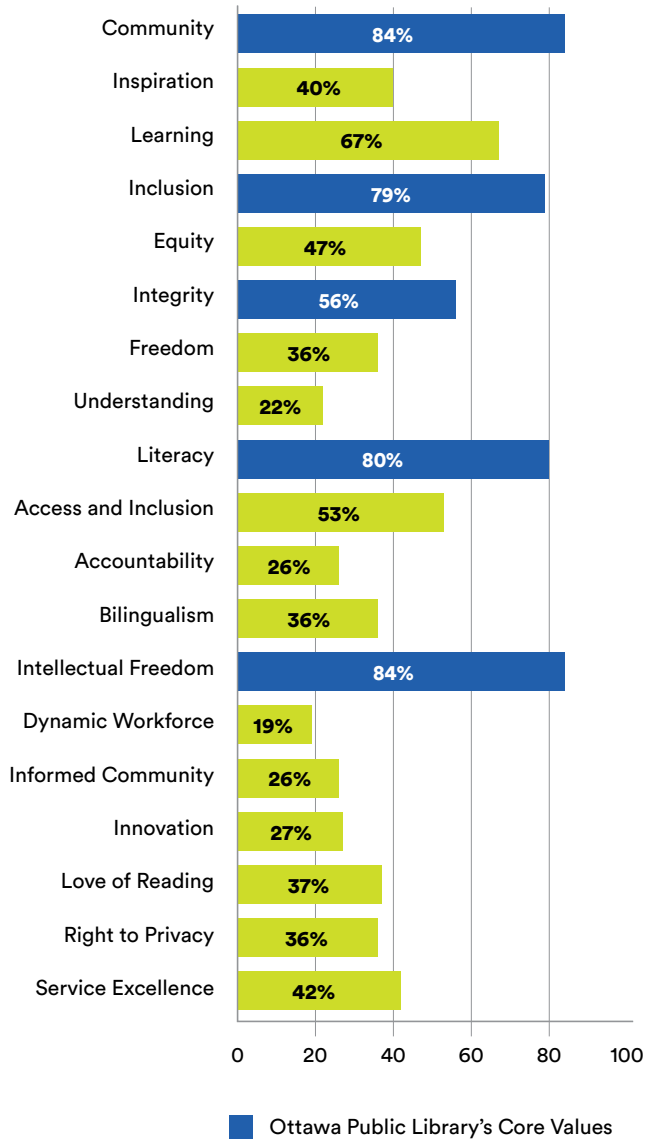
- "Inspire learning"—120 responses (127 if "inspiring learning" is included)
- "Spark curiosity"—97 responses (108 if "sparking curiosity" is included)
- "Connect people—81 responses (91 if "connecting people" is included)

There were a large number of responses that included either OPL's Vision (14 people identified "transform lives" as a mission element; 25 identified "Build community"), as well as OPL's values ("Community" appearing in 67 responses on its own; "Inclusion" appeared 15 times; "Integrity" 8 times; "Intellectual Freedom" 15 times; "Integrity" 22 times). In total, this means that OPL's mission was confused with either its Vision or Values more than 160 times.

It's worth noting that, even when guessing, the tone of the responses was overwhelmingly aspirational, positive, and in line with OPL's Mission, Vision and Values, with virtually every response attempting to answer correctly, or incorrectly identifying other positive attributes as being a part of OPL's Mission.

4. Which of the following are OPL's Core Values?

Checkboxes (Check all that apply) (N = 408)

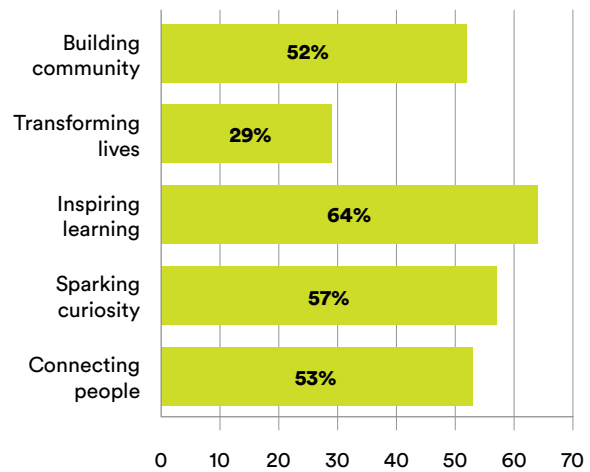| Value	Percentage
Community	84%
Inspiration	40%
Learning	67%
Inclusion	79%
Equity	47%
Integrity	56%
Freedom	36%
Understanding	22%
Literacy	80%
Access and Inclusion	53%
Accountability	26%
Bilingualism	36%
Intellectual Freedom	84%
Dynamic Workforce	19%
Informed Community	26%
Innovation	27%
Love of Reading	37%
Right to Privacy	36%
Service Excellence	42%

■ Ottawa Public Library's Core Values

Analysis

Ottawa Public Library's Core Values are Community, Inclusion, Integrity, Intellectual Freedom, and Literacy. Four of these were correctly identified by at least 80% of staff respondents. Only 'Integrity' was outside the top five responses, edged out by 'Learning'. This is not surprising as the elements of integrity (for example, accountability,

financial stewardship) are more directly influenced and impacted by the leadership in the organization, and not necessarily by all employees.

5. What element of OPL's vision and mission do you feel best reflects what you do?

Checkboxes (Check all that apply) (N = 408)

| Element	Percentage
Building community	52%
Transforming lives	29%
Inspiring learning	64%
Sparking curiosity	57%
Connecting people	53%

Analysis

Only 'transforming lives' scored less than 50% as a definition of something that best reflects what staff do. We see this as perhaps staff being modest— other responses indicate that inspiring learning and being a vital part of the Ottawa community is something OPL does best, which could be argued is at the heart of transforming lives.

6. OPL's values are Community, Inclusion, Integrity, Intellectual Freedom, and Literacy. Are these values reflected in your day-to-day work?

Multiple Choice (N = 353)

No — 11%
89% — Yes
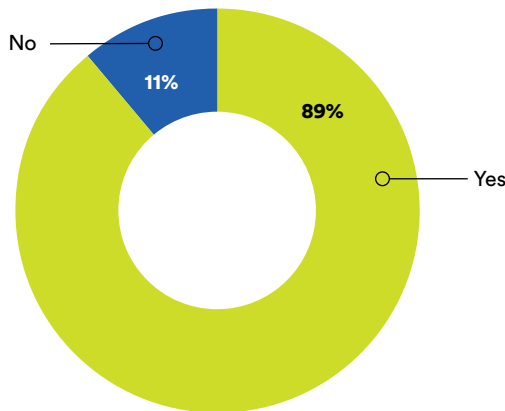
Analysis

Most staff (89%) believe that OPL's values are reflected in their day-to-day work. This aligns with the previous question asking them to identify those values—something that they were able to do quite well, as analyzed above. The 11% who did not believe that OPL's values were reflected in their day-to-day work were asked to submit written responses. Those responses were roughly divided into two categories:
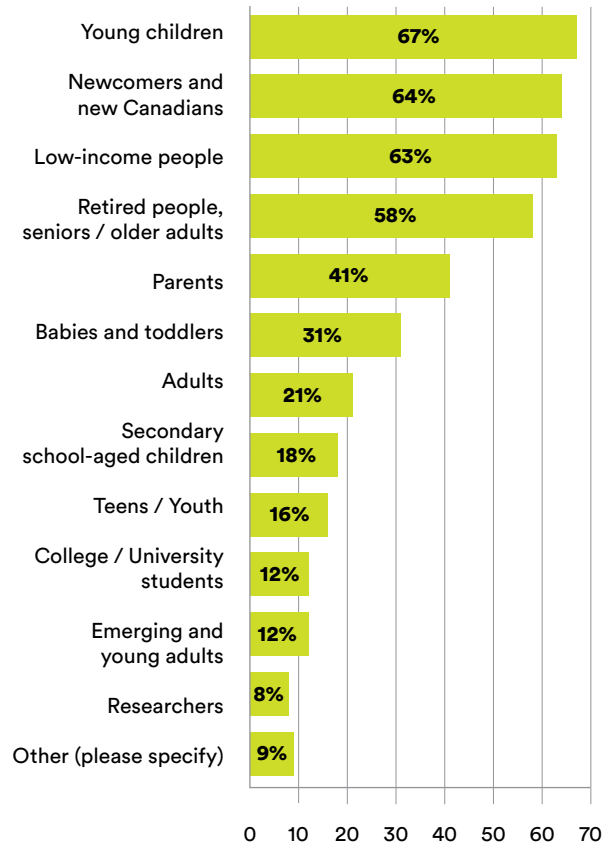
Community

OPL needs to better engage its community by consulting with its clients on all matters.

Inclusion

OPL needs to make meaningful efforts to include all members of its community, especially vulnerable groups (i.e., those who are low income or who are in economically precarious living situations; homeless populations).

7. Who do you think benefits most from a library?

Checkboxes (Select top three answers) (N = 346)

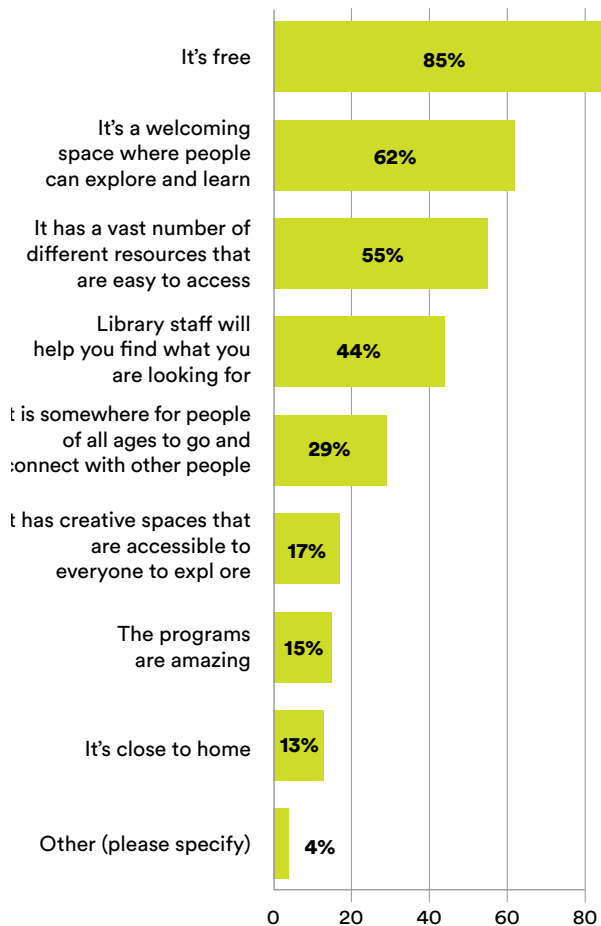| Category	%
Young children	67%
Newcomers and new Canadians	64%
Low-income people	63%
Retired people, seniors / older adults	58%
Parents	41%
Babies and toddlers	31%
Adults	21%
Secondary school-aged children	18%
Teens / Youth	16%
College / University students	12%
Emerging and young adults	12%
Researchers	8%
Other (please specify)	9%

Analysis

Staff told us that young children, newcomers and new Canadians, people with low-income, and retired/seniors/older adults benefit the most from the library. Staff believe that new Canadians are second most likely to benefit from OPL. This will be important to consider when developing a brand and strategy—having staff on board with the focus will be critical to its success.

8. What do you think is OPL's top benefit to its clients?

Checkboxes (Select top three answers) N = 356

| Benefit	Percentage
It's free	85%
It's a welcoming space where people can explore and learn	62%
It has a vast number of different resources that are easy to access	55%
Library staff will help you find what you are looking for	44%
It is somewhere for people of all ages to go and connect with other people	29%
It has creative spaces that are accessible to everyone to explore	17%
The programs are amazing	15%
It's close to home	13%
Other (please specify)	4%

Analysis

Library staff are of the belief that OPL's number one benefit is that it is free to use. Staff also largely believed that it was a welcoming space to learn and explore. Conversely, staff did not feel as strongly that benefits to clients were the creative spaces, the programs, or proximity to a client's home. However, it is important to consider that respondents were only allowed to select three options from the list of answers—simply meaning that proximity to a branch is not one of OPL's top benefits. This does not indicate that staff feel the branches are inaccessible, nor do they not believe programming is amazing , simply that there are other more pertinent top benefits.

9. Is OPL a place to come during 'down time' in the same way a park, café, or coffee shop is?

Multiple Choice (N = 354)

No — 26%
Yes — 72%
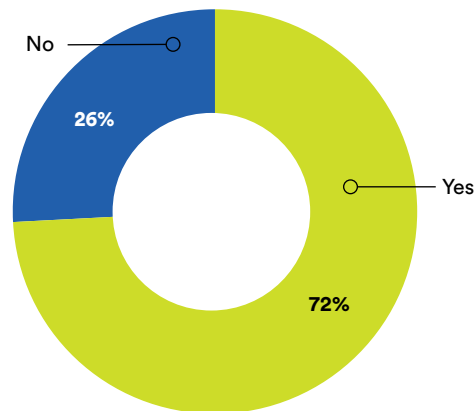
Analysis

Most library staff view the library as a place to come during down time, however almost a quarter don't feel that way. This could be seen as a small area of concern, if OPL would like its entire staff to be promoting branches as a place akin to a coffee shop or park.

Those who answered no (86 people) were asked to provide a written response explaining why. These responses can be broken up into two categories:

Quiet

There were as many responses about the library being too loud as there were about it being a traditionally quiet space. These respondents (about 13 people) cited that those coming to the library are likely expecting a quiet atmosphere, which may not necessarily be the experience they get.

Purpose

Staff said that many clients come to the library with a specific purpose or task in mind. These clients aren't looking to stay and relax or simply hang out, but are rather visiting the library to perform a task, and leave.

10. How would you rate the following:

Multiple Choice (Ratings Matrix) (N = 346)

	Poor	Somewhat Poor	Somewhat Good	Good	I don't know
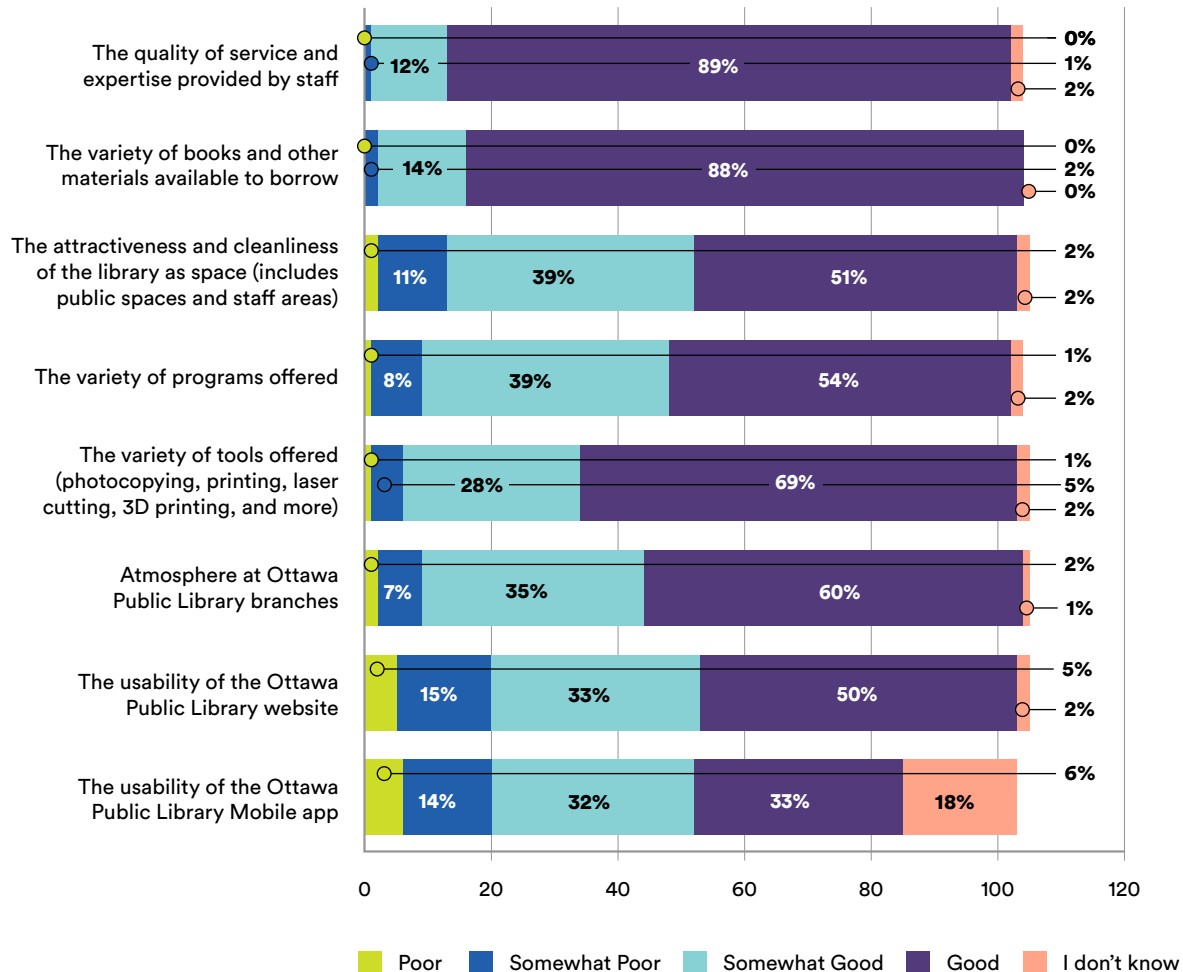
Analysis

Overall, staff members thought highly of OPL, with no category scoring below 63%, combining "Good" and "Somewhat Good". The app and the website both had the lowest ratings ("Poor" + "Somewhat Poor"), with the usability of the website scoring 20%, and the usability of the app scoring 19% in those combined categories. Attention should also be paid to the 18% of staff who said they didn't know about the quality of the app, which indicates an overall lack of knowledge on the product.

Staff thought that the library collection, and their own service of expertise to be at the top of the rating scale, each scoring 97% or higher in the top to rating categories. This tells us that staff are confident in the service they provide, and are happy with the breadth of materials they're able to access, and provide for clients.

11. What makes OPL different/stand out from a bookstore or a community or recreation centre?

Written Response (N = 318)

This write-in question had three major categories of responses:

Free

Staff overwhelmingly (163 individual mentions of "free", representing nearly 54% of total responses to this question, a rate approximately on par with all other responses combined) said that the provided services being free of charge was the main way OPL stands out. A few pointed out that there was no pressure to do or buy anything while you're at the library, which was seen as positive, and rare.

Staff/Service Excellence

65 staff, representing approximately 21% of total responses to this question indicated that both the quality of service provided by staff, as well as the genuine desire to help and work with clients was different than that of a book store or community centre. Staff take pride in the work that they do, and in the way that it helps their clients.

Programs and Resources

Staff touted the breadth and depth of service offerings, and indicated that resources were available at the library that simply weren't available anywhere else—especially without fees.
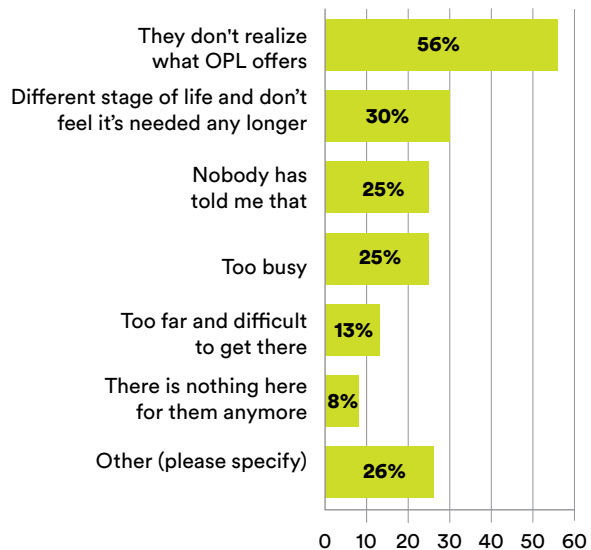
Additional Responses

OPL was also deemed unique because:

• There are a wide variety of books to borrow
• It is a public sphere that can feel personal and intimate
• It helps to build community

12. Has anyone told you why they no longer visit the library, or why they visit infrequently? If so, what reason(s) did they give?

(N = 330)

They don't realize what OPL offers	56%
Different stage of life and don't feel it's needed any longer	30%
Nobody has told me that	25%
Too busy	25%
Too far and difficult to get there	13%
There is nothing here for them anymore	8%
Other (please specify)	26%

Analysis

Staff believe that clients are not using OPL online or in person because they don't realize the breadth of OPL's offerings—this belief is shared by more than half of the respondents, and sits almost 30% higher than the next highest answer. Any future brand should take into consideration OPL's offerings, and make clear to the community all that it has for them. For those that selected "Other", there was no consistency within the 88 written responses (27%) to this question, with a wide variety of answers. About 10 respondents said that clients weren't visiting due to cleanliness concerns—both because of COVID-19, as well as concerns with things like bed bugs. A further 10 said that folks had moved to ebooks, digital resources (which OPL does provide, though none of these comments mentioned this). There were also a handful (5 or 6) who said that there simply wasn't enough time in client's lives, or else they hadn't worked OPL into their routine, thus it was forgotten.

13. What should OPL do to attract more people to the Library?

Written Response (N = 305)

This question saw two major streams of responses:

Promotion

Staff want OPL to better and more extensively promote itself—the breadth of its service offerings, the quality of its programming, and that it is free. Many staff indicated that they would like to see a major campaign, or at least consider targeted advertising beyond OPL's own social media channels. Responses to do with promotion, marketing, and campaigns accounted for approximately 50% of all responses to this question.

Community

Staff want OPL to better engage with its community. To attract different demographic groups, they feel that OPL needs to reach out directly and inform these groups what the library has for them specifically. There were also several responses that indicated a desire to adjust and adapt service offerings and programming based on location, and the community in which each branch is located.

14. What is one thing you'd like clients to know about Ottawa Public Library?

Written Response (N = 292)

Staff had a variety of answers to this write-in question. They fit, largely, into two categories:

Variety

The staff placed a high emphasis on the breadth of services, and the variety of materials, tools, and items to borrow. Staff repeatedly mentioned how expansive the offerings ("there is something for everyone" came up many times) are at OPL, which tells us not only that

they are proud of what OPL has to offer, but also that they believe that the public needs to be better informed of these offerings.

Free

Staff mentioned not only that collections were largely free, but also that instruments, programs, and virtually all other items available were free from fees. This reinforces the general belief that the primary benefit of the library is that it is free.

15. Where do you currently receive information about OPL's brand, mission, vision, and values?

Checkboxes (N = 334)

This question has been omitted from this section of the report, which focuses more on the OPL brand. Responses to this, and all questions can be found in the appendix.

16. Where do you want to receive information about OPL's brand, mission, vision, and values?

Checkboxes (N = 330)

This question has been omitted from this section of the report, which focuses more on the OPL brand. Responses to this, and all questions can be found in the appendix.

17. What name do you most often use when referring to Ottawa Public Library?

Multiple Choice (N = 334)

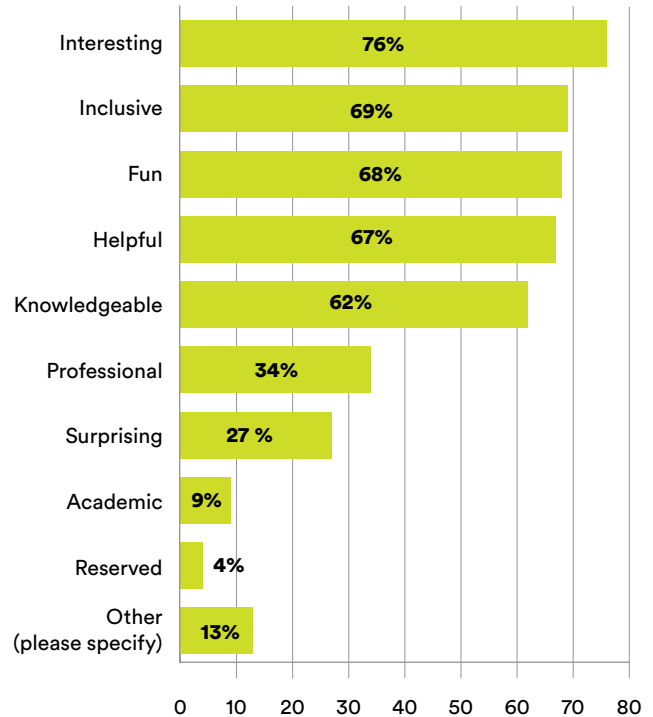| Name	Percentage
OPL	44%
The Library	25%
Ottawa Public Library	24%
I don't know	1%
Other (please specify)	6%
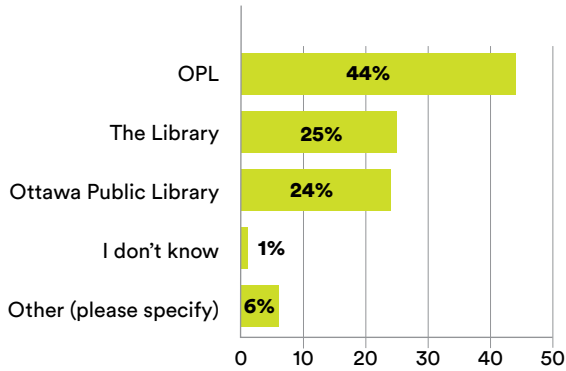
Analysis

Staff use OPL at almost double the rate that they use 'The Library' or its full name 'Ottawa Public Library'. We can attribute this to the fact that OPL uses its acronym in the majority of its communications.

There were also 20 written responses to this question. Of those, three said "The Public Library", three said they use the name of the specific branch, five said they use OPL internally, and another name when speaking to clients (individual respondents had different names they used with clients, but all choices above, along with the branch name, and "The Public Library" were represented), with the balance of respondents saying either a version of "All of the above" or that they use the names presented interchangeably, with their choice varying based on the context of their interaction and audience.

18. What tone do you think Ottawa Public Library should have in communications (social media, promotional materials, emails, etc.)?

Checkboxes (N = 335)

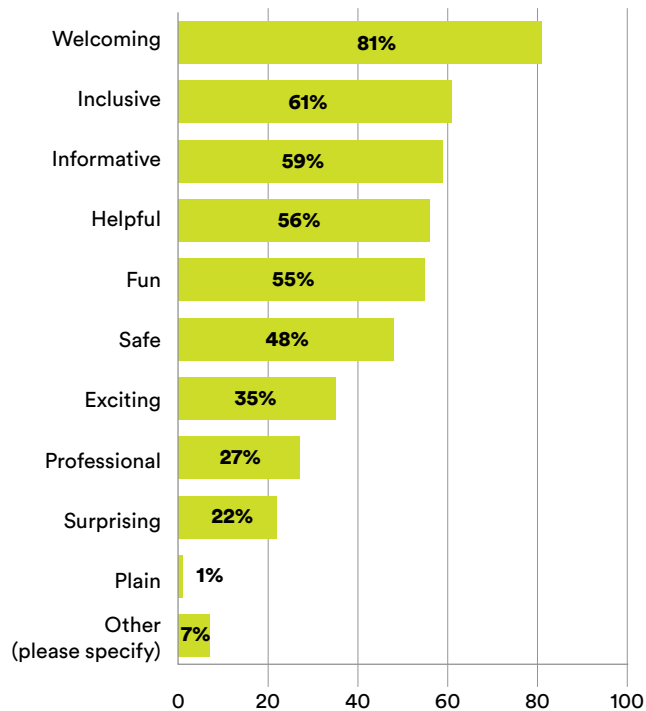| Tone	Percentage
Interesting	76%
Inclusive	69%
Fun	68%
Helpful	67%
Knowledgeable	62%
Professional	34%
Surprising	27 %
Academic	9%
Reserved	4%
Other (please specify)	13%

Analysis

Interesting, Inclusive, Fun, and Helpful were the most selected answers. These four categories can all work well together, and easily feed into one another. Being helpful and inclusive builds better communities, especially if the programs are interesting and fun. Written responses again referred to community inclusion,and accessibility.

19. What would you like OPL's 'personality' to be?

Checkboxes; Written Response (N = 335)

Welcoming — 81%
Inclusive — 61%
Informative — 59%
Helpful — 56%
Fun — 55%
Safe — 48%
Exciting — 35%
Professional — 27%
Surprising — 22%
Plain — 1%
Other (please specify) — 7%

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)

Analysis

A welcoming environment is what staff most wanted from OPL. Informative, Inclusive, Helpful, and Fun rounded out the top five, which supports the previous tone question (#18), and further emphasizes the desire from staff to ensure that OPL is an open, friendly space where all are welcome.

20. Would you be able to describe the OPL logo if you were asked?

Multiple Choice (N = 335)

No — 26%
Yes — 74%
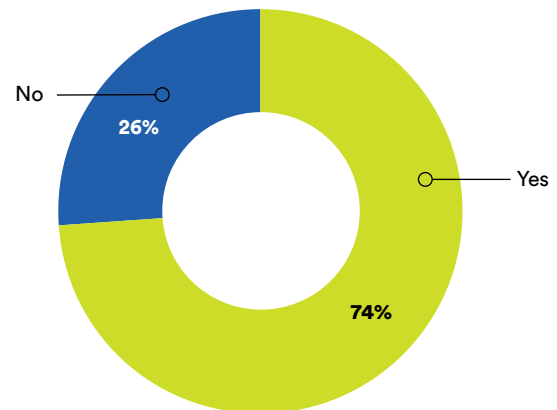
Analysis

Nearly a quarter of OPL staff said they wouldn't be able to describe the OPL logo, if asked. Even with 75% saying 'Yes', there is room for improvement. This tells us that either staff aren't aware of the design considerations behind the logo or that the logo is difficult to describe.. The responses to question 21 below validates the latter.

21.Do you feel the current OPL logo reflects the library today?

Multiple Choice; Written Response (N = 322)

This response was split almost exactly down the middle. 162 respondents said 'Yes', while 160 said 'No'. This is especially relevant if OPL chooses to redesign their logo.

Those who chose to write a response:

Outdated

37 respondents said that the current logo was dated. Responses in this category included responses like "it needs updating" to "It's a bit dated".

Books

Many respondents said that the book in the logo no longer represents all the OPL does now. These respondents were split on whether books should still be the focus, and those who thought, given that OPL offers so much more than books, that it no longer made sense to keep it in the logo.

22. Complete this sentence: If OPL were to design a new logo, it should be:

Multiple Choice (N = 331)
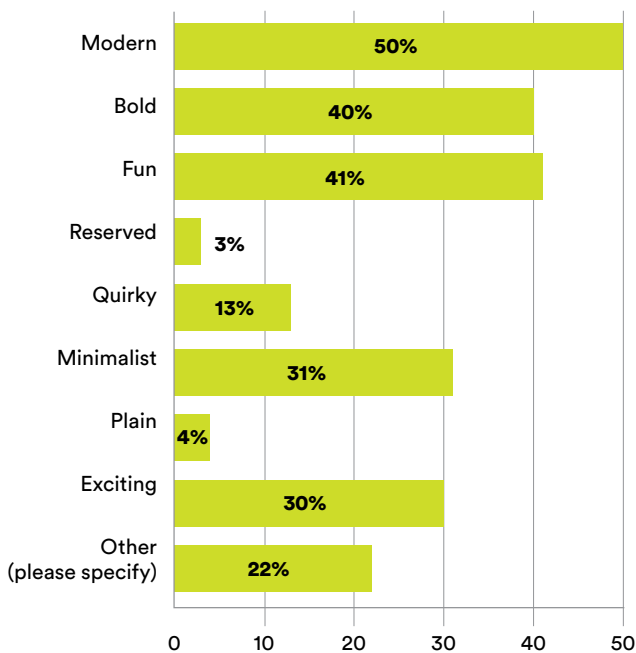
Analysis

Coupled with the responses from questions 20 and 21, we can begin to see a clear picture regarding what staff would want in a new logo: An updated, modernized, bold, fun logo. Staff have indicated that the logo feels dated, and this response reinforces that idea, and adds to

it that more than 40% would wish for something that is bolder, and a bit fun. That said, even

the highest ranking response ('Modern') hits only the 50% threshold, which is in line with question 21's responses regarding whether or not the current logo reflects the Ottawa Public Library of today.

2.5—Key insights and themes from the staff survey

There were several repeated themes throughout the staff survey:

Community

OPL is seen as an integral part of the community. We believe this is not only accurate, but something that can and should be leveraged for any future strategic branding work.

A welcoming, inclusive organization

Time and time again, staff indicated that they wanted OPL to feel like a welcoming, inclusive organization. In some cases, staff thought that OPL fell short of that goal. What is most relevant, however, is that while there is still work to be done, staff believe that OPL needs to be more vocal in its promotion of OPL as a provider of spaces where everyone can come to be themselves. This further reinforces the previous theme of Community—a truly welcoming, inclusive, and safe space is an important aspect of community building.

Learning

Staff indicated that learning is central to the work they do delivering library services. *It was the element most remembered from OPL's mission. It also rated highly on what excites staff most about working at the Library ("Helping* people engage in learning".)

Teenagers, newcomers, low income individuals, and seniors

Staff thought that OPL should be focused most on these four demographics, as they benefit

the most from the library. There was frequent mention in written responses of how tailoring messaging, and directly engaging with these demographics would have not only a net benefit to OPL, but certainly to those communities. Letting these groups know that OPL is there

for them, and has programming specifically for them was seen as important to staff.

Self-promotion and pride

Overall, staff thought that OPL could do a better job at promoting itself. There was a true sense of pride in the work that staff are doing in branches, which they wanted translated to advertising, marketing, and promotion in general. Staff also thought that OPL should be heavily promoting itself outside of its traditional social media/ website channels to attract net new clients.

Staff

Staff feel they deliver quality service, as well as expertise. Staff should be continually engaged throughout strategic and branding work as they know OPL best, and are already proud of the work that they do. Leveraging their knowledge and enthusiasm will pay off in dividends.

Visual identity

In the three questions related to the visual identity, there was a near equal split when it came to how OPL's visual identity reflects the organization. While those in favour of a change wanted a more updated, fun, and bold logo, there were still 50% that thought it should stay the same.

2.6—Overall internal insights and themes

Connection

OPL provides a place for people to connect with one another; in addition to connecting people to resources and community services.

Access

OPL provides free and equitable access for everyone. This includes access to resources, programs and services. OPL is also seen as providing opportunities to connect with the community.

Community

OPL is seen as being central in creating community, both inside and outside the library. OPL meets the needs of the community, regardless of branch location, and provides a sense of belonging and connection for all.

A welcoming, inclusive organization

OPL is striving to be seen as a welcoming, inclusive organization. Some staff believe OPL still has work to do and must promote itself more as a place where people can be themselves.

Intellectual freedom

Viewed as a cornerstone of OPL in enhancing democracy.

Self-promotion and pride

OPL feels they should promote themselves more outside traditional social media/ website channels to attract new clients.

Staff are seen as experts

OPL believes staff offer expertise and quality service.

OPL and the City of Ottawa: There is an obvious visual link between OPL and the City of Ottawa through the current visual identity.

Visual Identity

There is a near equal split among OPL on updating the visual identity. Half feel it should be more fun and updated; the other 50% think it should stay the same.

OPL has an opportunity to build awareness and usage

OPL largely feels that the broader community is not fully aware of what it can offer, indicating that additional "fun" marketing is needed to entice people to come and see it for themselves.

OPL is perceived as stodgy and bureaucratic

Staff feel OPL's brand personality could be perceived as "old and dated" "slow moving" and "risk averse," however we know that plenty of innovation is taking place and that is an important message for the public.

Lack of focus on clients as distinct demographic groups

OPL largely feels it needs to segment its audiences to tailor communications.

Focusing on teenagers, newcomers, low income individuals, and seniors

OPL's internal stakeholders believe these four demographics should be a focus for greater engagement and targeted messaging.

3.0—External Engagement

3.1—Overview

The following section outlines the findings from our community group engagement, as well as our findings from the public survey. This section is split into five parts:

3.2 Key interview themes

3.3 Perceptions of OPL

3.4 Results and analysis of the public survey

3.5 Key survey insights and themes from the public survey

3.6 Overall external insights and themes

3.2—Key Interview Themes

The following section highlights the external interviews' key themes which will inform the future brand strategy and identity. These insights are helpful in validating and comparing the perceptions of internal stakeholders. It is also helpful to know how external stakeholders value OPL in meeting the needs of the public and their suggestions for connecting with more audiences.

Access

Community organizations see OPL as a public space that is evolving to become more accessible to all.
Generally, external stakeholders feel that OPL is making progress in ensuring its facilities and resources are accessible to all. For example, OPL offers large-print and braille resources, as well as collections in multiple languages. For the community organizations consulted, access also means breaking down barriers for new immigrants, individuals from low-income neighbourhoods, and those with disability challenges in how welcome they feel when they come to OPL. They believe that OPL is a point of connection for these groups and continuing to enhance the facilities and resources to accommodate all users is important, as is ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels they belong.

Partnership

There is an opportunity to further partnerships between OPL and community organizations.
Two of the immigration community organizations who participated in interviews feel that OPL can be a strong presence in immigrant communities by being more active as a source for information and services. Similarly, the organization supporting people with disabilities, and public housing, is open to partnering in different ways, including promoting OPL to its clients, and advising on how OPL can further enhance its offerings to be even more accessible.

Targeted Promotions

Community organizations feel targeted marketing will help build awareness.
The community organizations who participated feel there is an opportunity for OPL to target its marketing in the communities. For example, the immigration organizations feel the current partnership is "underdeveloped" and feel OPL can work with them further to engage and target marketing in immigrant communities. As well, public housing and the organization supporting people with disabilities are open to helping with marketing to their audiences.

Not top-of-mind among Non-Users

OPL is not always part of their routine.
Two university students and a retired couple revealed a common theme among these two generations—that OPL is not part of their routine. For students, they would prefer to stay on campus to access resources, and the seniors are wary of public spaces and did not really think about what OPL could offer them.

3.3—Perceptions of OPL

The following section outlines what external stakeholders thought about OPL, and how it fits within the Ottawa community. This section has been written based on perceptions that came up naturally during the course of workshops and interviews.

OPL is committed to being an inclusive organization that supports accessibility in all forms
There is consensus among the community organizations that OPL has the desire to meet the needs of all Ottawa residents. They see the efforts being made to be inclusive and welcoming, and they appreciate the work being done to ensure facilities are accessible and resources are available for people with disabilities.

OPL needs to partner more to increase usage
Community organizations believe OPL can partner more with distinct groups of people to determine their needs and how best to meet them. For example, efforts to work directly with new immigrants, people in low-income areas, and those with disabilities.

Non-users do not have an opinion of OPL
External interviews indicate that non-users know OPL exists, but the organization is not top of mind. This is not as a result of a negative perception or experience, it is that OPL isn't a part of Non-Users regular routines.

3.4—Results and analysis of the public survey

Intent conducted a survey to consult the public regarding perceptions, awareness, and sentiment related to OPL as an institution, the OPL brand, and OPL interactions with the public.

Overview

Total Responses

19,540 respondents including 18,243 who completed the survey to the end .

Language

- 86.5% English respondents
- 13.5% Francophone respondents

Active Users vs. Non-Users

- 92% of respondents were Active Users (16,800)—those who had visited OPL online or in person within the past year
- 8% of respondents were Non-Users (1,443)—those who had not visited OPL online or in person within the past year

Legend

Multiple Choice

The question allowed for only one possible response.

Checkboxes

The question could have multiple responses selected. Where indicated, the number of responses was limited to a set number (i.e. "Check your top three answers").

Written Response

The respondent was asked to write in a response to this question. A written response could be combined with a Checkbox response, in the case of questions with "Other (please specify)" as an option.

Ratings Matrix

Respondents were asked to evaluate one or more criteria (ex. "The quality of service provided by OPL staff") using the same ratings scale (ex. Good/ Somewhat Good/Somewhat Poor/Poor). Only one possible rating per criteria was allowed.

Notes

Percentages within Charts and Graphs

The charts and graphs illustrated below represent only the responses to that specific question, not percentages associated with the total number of respondents since not all survey respondents answered all questions. Each question includes the total number of responses each question received, represented as 'N'.

Complete Survey

The following survey questions do not represent the full breadth of questions asked in the survey. The questions in the section below are those that are particularly relevant to Ottawa Public Library's brand. For a complete set of survey questions and survey results, please refer to the Appendix.

Demographic Representation

OPL indicated that it was important that the consultation hear from as close to a demographically representative sample size to ensure that we were accurately reflecting the makeup of the citizens of Ottawa. This was particularly important for "hard to reach" demographics. Survey data strived to meet the following thresholds:

- Racialized persons

  — 9% of public survey respondents self-identified as a
  — "Racialized person"
  — 31.9% of Ottawans are a "Visible minority"

- Francophone

  — 13.4% of survey respondents could be identified as Francophone
  — 13.9% of Ottawans identify French as their first language

- Indigenous

  — 4% of survey respondents self-identified as "Aboriginal peoples"

- 2.59% of Ottawans self-identify as "Indigenous"
- Immigrant

  — 13% of survey respondents self-identified as "Immigrant"
  — 25.47% of Ottawans are immigrants

While the percentages of public survey respondents for the Racialized persons and Immigrant categories do not match those of the general population, the size of the samples (1,427 and 2,090) means the results for those subsamples are statistically significant.

Questions

This section follows the survey structure, as noted in the methodology above. It is broken down into three sections:

3.4.1 Questions asked of all respondents

This section shows responses from both Active Users and Non-Users. The final question in this section ("Have you visited OPL in person or online within the past year?") was used to stream respondents into 'Active Users' and 'Non-Users'.

3.4.2 Questions asked only of those identified as Active Users

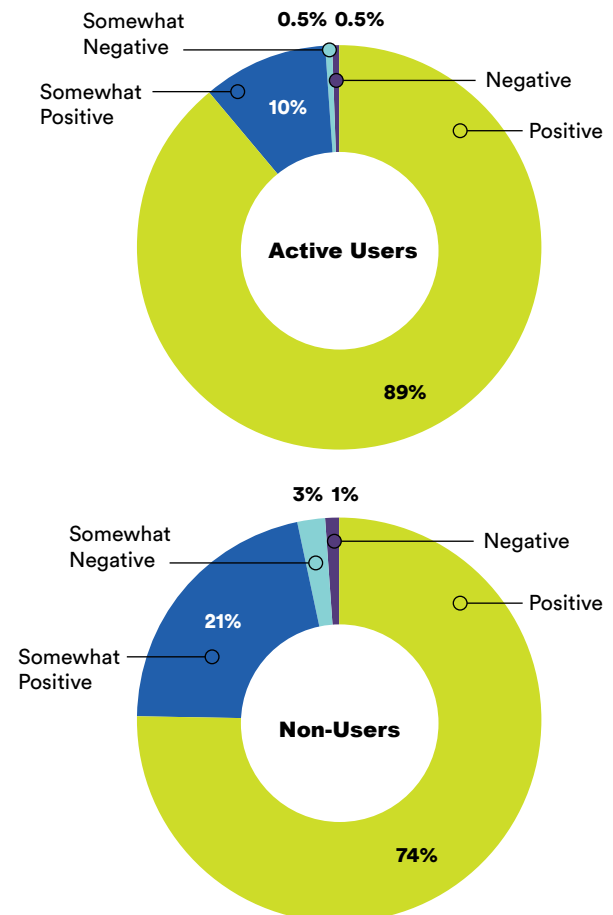3.4.3 Questions asked only of those identified as Non-Users

For a full breakdown of demographic questions, please refer to the appendix.

3.4.1—Questions asked of all respondents

1. What is your general impression of public libraries?

Multiple Choice
(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Active Users:
Somewhat Negative 0.5%
Negative 0.5%
Somewhat Positive 10%
Positive 89%

Non-Users:
Somewhat Negative 3%
Negative 1%
Somewhat Positive 21%
Positive 74%

Analysis

Respondents have overwhelmingly positive (89% Library Users and almost 75% for Non-Users) attitudes towards libraries in general. Adding in those who have 'Somewhat Positive' sentiments about libraries, and it is clear: Almost all respondents (99% of Users, and 95% of Non-Users) have good associations with libraries. While this information isn't specific to OPL, it would be a safe assumption that, at the very least, there is a great deal of goodwill and positive sentiment regarding OPL, given the public's general feelings towards public libraries.

2. When you hear the word 'library,' what comes to your mind?

Written Response (N = 15,958)

There were several notable categories of responses to this question:

- Books (66%, 10,541)
- Community (14%, 2,205)
- Read (13%, 2,035)
- Calm and Quiet (10%, 1,608)
- Free (7%, 1,169)

Analysis

It is no surprise that "Books" was referenced more than any other word in written responses. ("Community" placed highly among respondents' written answers.)

In reviewing the written responses, a common thread was that OPL provides quiet, relaxing, or comfortable spaces. This was meant both at face value—a venue free from distractions and the bustle of the city—but also as a feeling, a place where people can come to quiet their minds, and escape their busy lives for a moment. Words like "peaceful" and "serene" appeared numerous times throughout written responses.
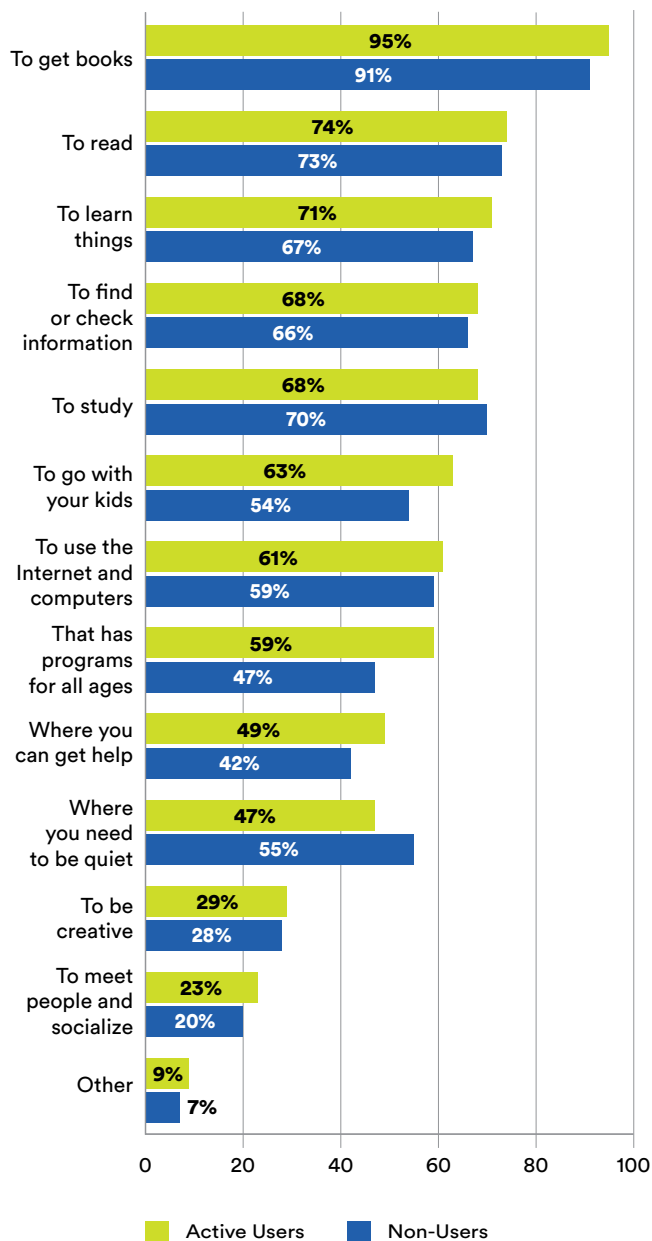
We believe that there is an opportunity to engage clients and prospective clients by illustrating how a library can make them feel—peaceful, quiet, calm, and a space for near-infinite exploration through an extensive collection, and quality service and programming. OPL is certainly more than just books.

Note

For this question, we've combined the responses of both Users and Non-Users as their responses were virtually identical, especially for the top responses.

3. Whether you've ever been to a public library or not, what do you think a public library is? A place...

Checkboxes; Written Response
(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

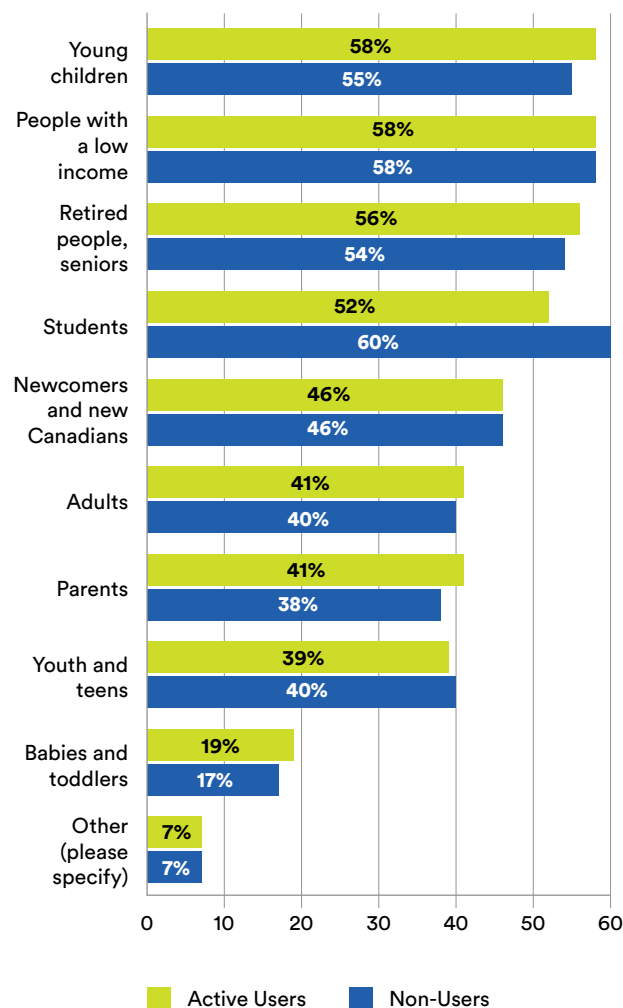|	Active Users	Non-Users
To get books	95%	91%
To read	74%	73%
To learn things	71%	67%
To find or check information	68%	66%
To study	68%	70%
To go with your kids	63%	54%
To use the Internet and computers	61%	59%
That has programs for all ages	59%	47%
Where you can get help	49%	42%
Where you need to be quiet	47%	55%
To be creative	29%	28%
To meet people and socialize	23%	20%
Other	9%	7%

Analysis

There is no surprise that most people associate a library with books. Nor is it a surprise that libraries are associated with 'academic' activities (i.e., reading, learning, studying etc.)

What is notable is that the library was only considered as a community space to bring children, by about half of the survey's respondents, and even fewer—between 20% and 23%—thought that the library was an appropriate place to meet and socialize with people.

4. Who do you think benefits most from a public library?

Checkboxes (Top three responses); Written Response (Active Users N = 17168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Young children	58%	55%
People with a low income	58%	58%
Retired people, seniors	56%	54%
Students	52%	60%
Newcomers and new Canadians	46%	46%
Adults	41%	40%
Parents	41%	38%
Youth and teens	39%	40%
Babies and toddlers	19%	17%
Other (please specify)	7%	7%

Legend: Active Users, Non-Users

Analysis

Most respondents thought young children, people with low income, and seniors benefit most from libraries (between 54% and 58% of both users and non-users). This indicates a highly held perception and recognition of the benefit of library services being free of charge to Ottawa citizens. Students come next with non-users (60%) perceiving the Library as benefiting students more than active users do (52%); indicating that the Library is perceived as a support or resource for learning and studying. Both users and non-users chose newcomers and new Canadians as the next largest group that benefits from the Library, suggesting the Library is perceived as both affordable and a valuable learning resource for newcomers. Respondents indicate that they do not see adults, parents, youth and teens benefitting as much from the Library as the previously mentioned groups; suggesting that the leisure/entertainment/informational aspects of the Library are not as strongly perceived as the free and learning aspects of the Library. The responses indicate an opportunity for OPL to raise awareness of the benefits of the Library for youth, teens, parents and their children, and families generally to strengthen that perception.
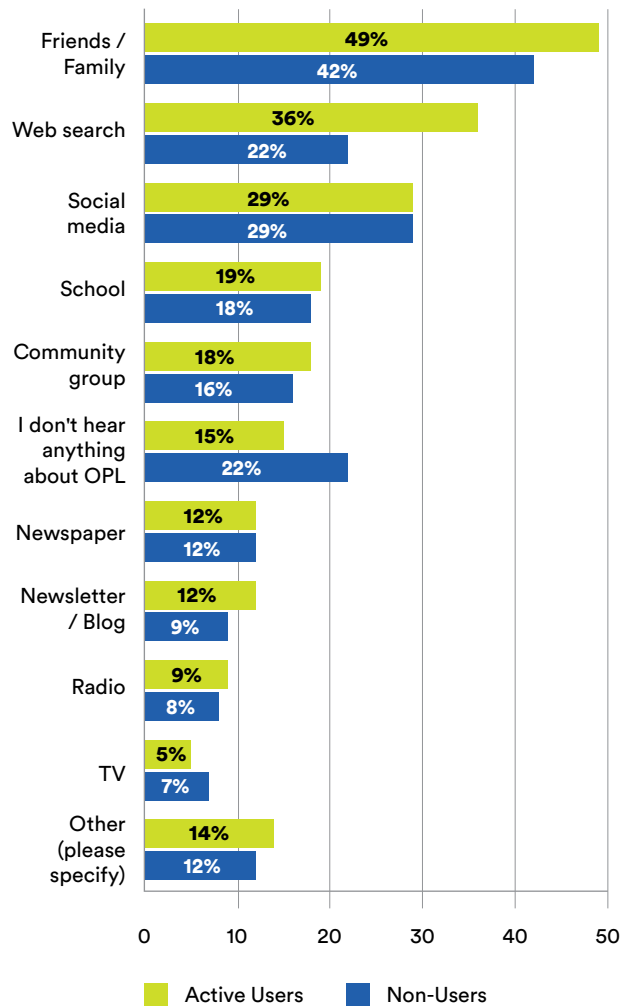
Respondents perceive that teens do not significantly benefit from library services, an admittedly hard-to-reach demographic. The responses also indicate that OPL could strengthen awareness and perception within newcomer and immigrant communities, whom fewer than half of respondents said benefit from the Library.

Notes

This question also had a write-in option, with 1,377 responses. The vast majority of those responses—838—said that everyone benefited from a library in their community. This was true of both users and Non-Users.

5. Where have you heard about Ottawa Public Library?

Checkboxes; Written Response
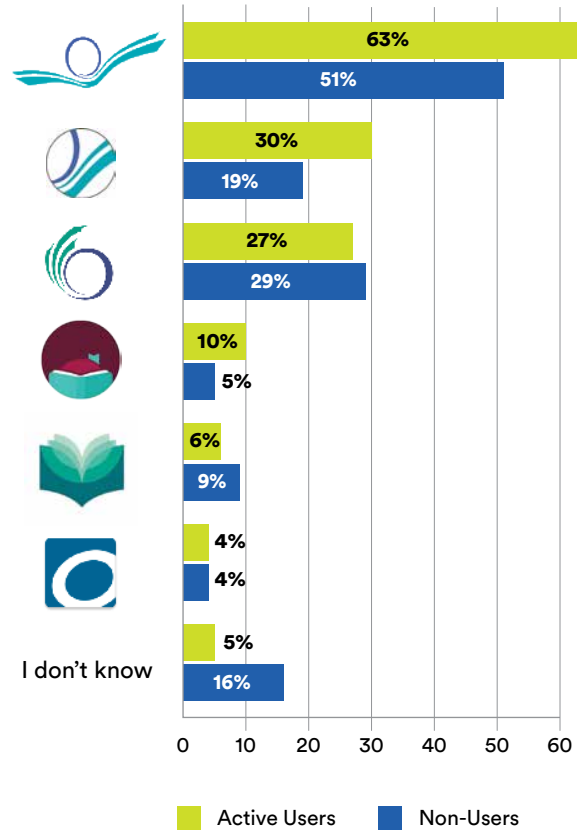*(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)*

Active Users ▮   **Non-Users** ▮

Category	Active Users	Non-Users
Friends / Family	49%	42%
Web search	36%	22%
Social media	29%	29%
School	19%	18%
Community group	18%	16%
I don't hear anything about OPL	15%	22%
Newspaper	12%	12%
Newsletter / Blog	12%	9%
Radio	9%	8%
TV	5%	7%
Other (please specify)	14%	12%

Analysis

Most respondents hear about OPL through friends and family, followed by a web search or through social media. In written responses, most Users and Non-Users said that the library simply "is" or that it was an unquestioned part of any city's makeup—they didn't hear about it, they simply knew it to exist.

6. Which of the above is the logo of Ottawa Public Library?

Checkboxes (Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Active Users ▮   **Non-Users** ▮

Logo	Active Users	Non-Users
(1)	63%	51%
(2)	30%	19%
(3)	27%	29%
(4)	10%	5%
(5)	6%	9%
(6)	4%	4%
I don't know	5%	16%

Analysis

When asked to identify the Ottawa Public Library logo, 63% of Users, and 51% of Non-Users correctly identified OPL's primary logo. OPL's secondary logo was much less well known, with only 30% of users and 19% of Non-Users correctly identifying it. Together, these statistics show that though two thirds of Active Users recognize the brand, there is still room to grow.

More than a quarter of respondents incorrectly identified the City of Ottawa's logo as OPL's. This is a significant percentage of respondents. OPL should consider how to eliminate this confusion between visual identities.

Finally, there is a substantial gap between brand recognition in Non-Users vs Users. Non-users are 10% less likely to recognize any logo as OPL's, and even when they correctly identify an OPL logo, they are 10% less likely to do so than users. There is an opportunity here to (re-) introduce Non-Users to OPL as a brand.

7. Here are the current logos of Ottawa Public Library. What do they say to you about Ottawa Public Library?

Written Response (N = 18,675)

Analysis

Book

6,816 respondents mentioned "book" in their response, with about half of those mentioning only that the logo looked like a book, or it meant that the library had books. Many (300+) thought that the 'O' overtop of the book looked like someone reading. "Read" or "Reading" came up in 2,228 responses.

Ottawa

5,134 respondents mentioned "Ottawa," with most of those responses centered around the 'O' representing the city. In fact, "City of Ottawa" was mentioned 1,315 times, with the majority of those mentions specifically aligning the OPL visual identity with that of the City of Ottawa. Clearly, there is an interconnectedness between the two visual identities.

Library

Taking it at face value, 1,161 respondents said either that it represented Ottawa Public Library, or that it said OPL was a library.

No Opinion

About 491 people said either that they had "No idea," "No opinion," or "I don't know," which leaves an opportunity to make any future brand clearly mean something to all users.
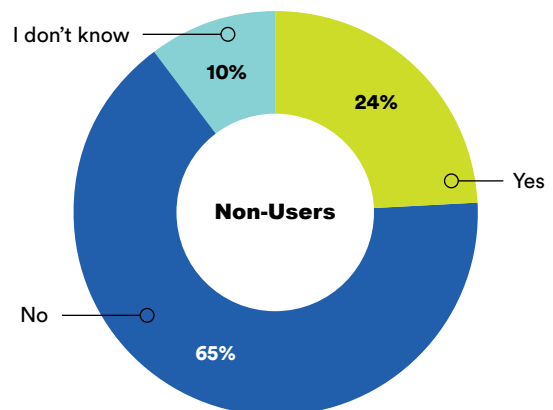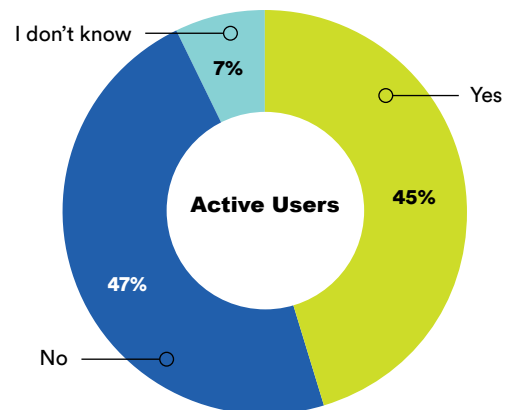
Note

There were 18,675 total responses, however 218 of them were simply a period, space, or question mark, without any actual written response or insight.

8. "If it's out there, it's in here" Have you seen or heard this slogan before?

Multiple Choice
(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Active Users:
- I don't know: 7%
- Yes: 45%
- No: 47%

Non-Users:
- I don't know: 10%
- Yes: 24%
- No: 65%

Analysis

The slogan is much less known by Non-Users than Active Users (a difference of almost 15%). We can infer that this difference is, at least in part, because the slogan is on every library card that has been issued over the last 10 years, although almost half of the cardholders who have used the card within the last year did not recognize the slogan. Of note, OPL has not used the slogan much in any marketing or communications other than the card in recent years, which is also likely a contributing factor to the lack of recognition. This tells us that there is significant work to be done to promote this, or any future slogan.

9. What does this slogan say to you about Ottawa Public Library?

Written Response (N = 15,802)

Analysis

Many (28%, 5,429) noted that the slogan was simply to be taken at face value: that OPL has a lot of books, resources, or information—some went as far as saying that the slogan meant that OPL has all the books, resources, and information. This has a twofold problem, as we see it:

It's misleading or untrue
Obviously, Ottawa Public Library doesn't have every book. It's also obvious that OPL could never have all pieces of information ever created.

It places unfair expectations on OPL
Some respondents wrote that, even after they've made requests, a book/publication/etc. was not brought into the library—something that was problematic for those respondents. If OPL suggests that everything that exists can be found within the walls of the library, then delivering on that promise is required, even if it is impossible.

Others (19%, 3,646) said that the slogan described a place of learning, knowledge, information, and resources.

"Books" appeared 2,799 times in responses (14%), which again comes as no surprise—with most simply referring to the fact that books were available at the library.

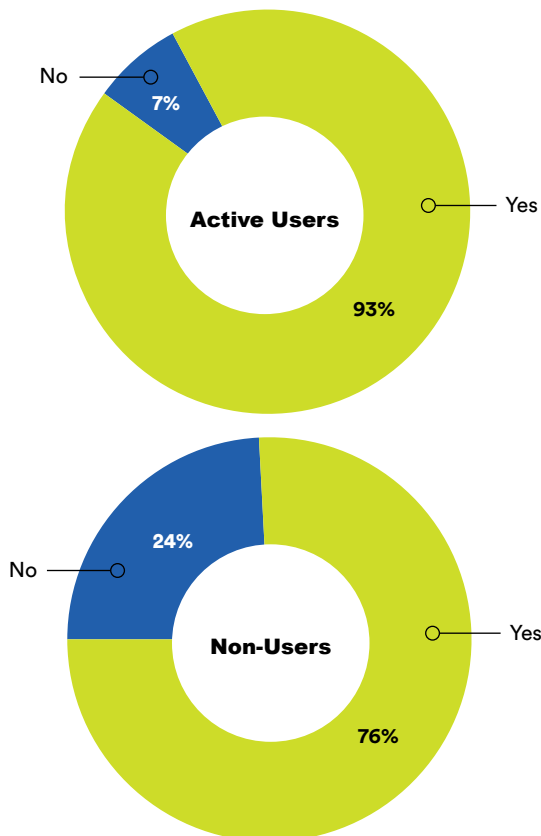About 366 respondents (2%) said that they didn't know what the slogan meant, or had not heard it before.

Note

There is some overlap in all categories above.

10. Did you know that the collections and programs at Ottawa Public Library are free?

Multiple Choice
(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Active Users: No 7%, Yes 93%

Non-Users: No 24%, Yes 76%

Note

The analysis for this question is combined with the analysis for question 12, immediately below, given their similar focus.
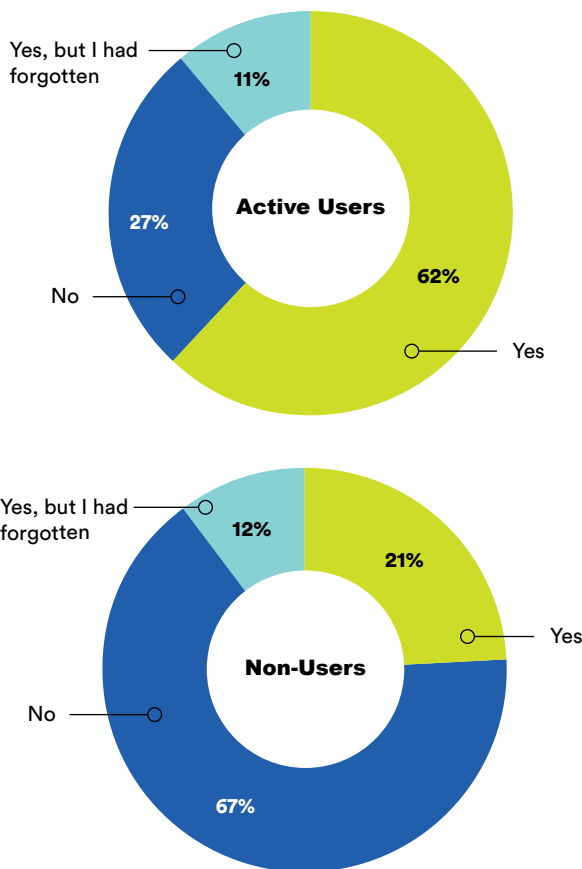
11. Did you know Ottawa Public Library does not charge late fees when books or other materials are not returned on time?

Multiple Choice
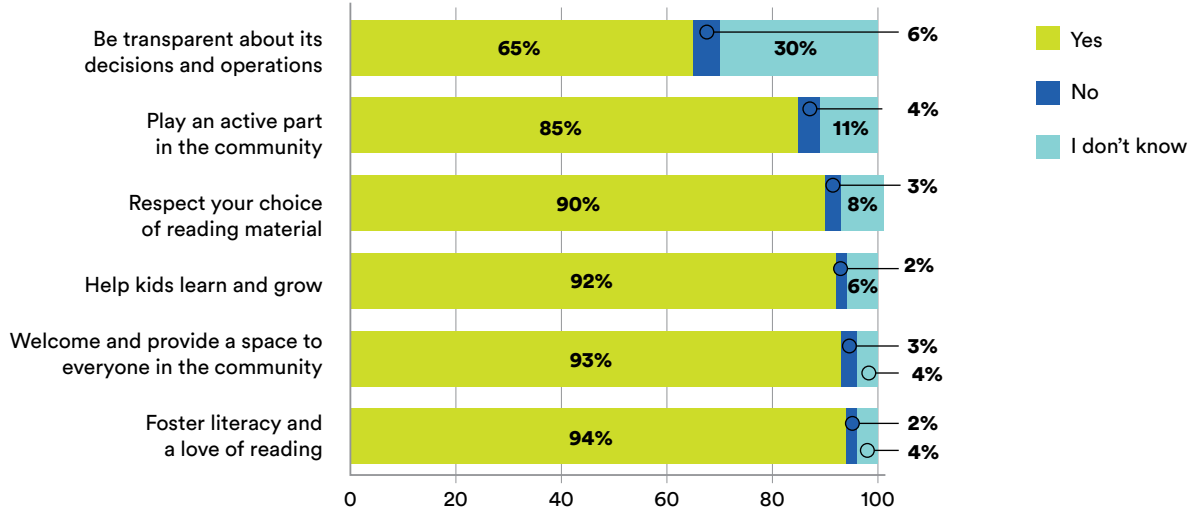*(Active User N = 17,168) (Non-User N = 1,507)*

Analysis

Virtually all Active Users (93%) are aware that collections and programs are free at OPL. But that number drops to 76% for Non-Users. This, on its own, is perhaps not surprising, however what is significant is that only about three in five Active Users and slightly more than a quarter of Non-Users knew with confidence that late fees had been eliminated at OPL. This is a gap in perception and messaging.
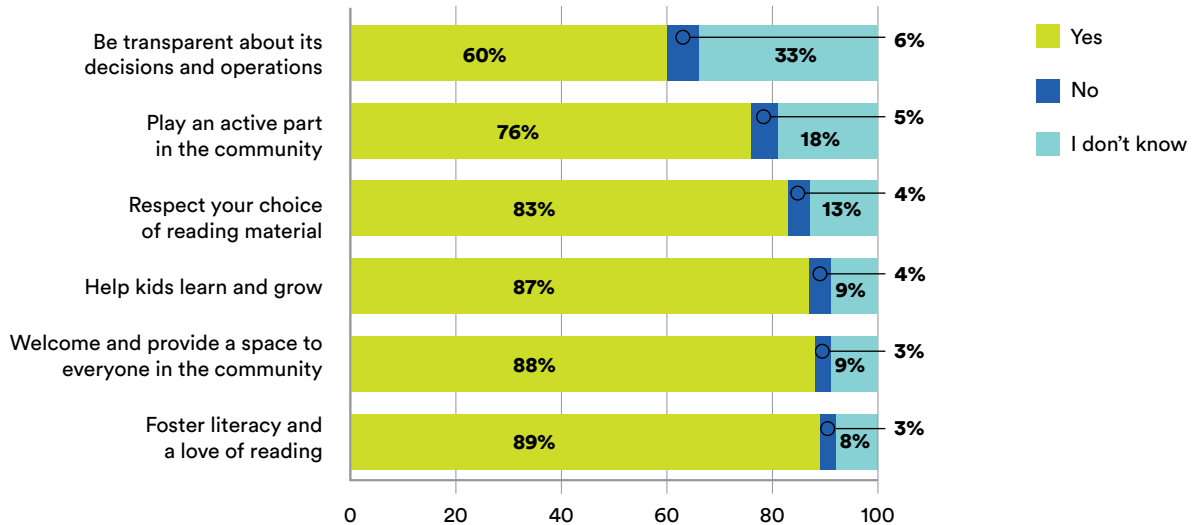

Active Users: Yes, but I had forgotten 11%, No 27%, Yes 62%

Non-Users: Yes, but I had forgotten 12%, Yes 21%, No 67%

12. Do you trust OPL to...

Multiple Choice (Ratings Matrix) (Active Users N = 17,168)

	Yes	No	I don't know
Be transparent about its decisions and operations	65%	6%	30%
Play an active part in the community	85%	4%	11%
Respect your choice of reading material	90%	3%	8%
Help kids learn and grow	92%	2%	6%
Welcome and provide a space to everyone in the community	93%	3%	4%
Foster literacy and a love of reading	94%	2%	4%

(Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Yes	No	I don't know
Be transparent about its decisions and operations	60%	6%	33%
Play an active part in the community	76%	5%	18%
Respect your choice of reading material	83%	4%	13%
Help kids learn and grow	87%	4%	9%
Welcome and provide a space to everyone in the community	88%	3%	9%
Foster literacy and a love of reading	89%	3%	8%

Analysis

Ottawa Public Library is a highly trusted organization, especially when it comes to access, respect, creation of a safe space, and playing an active role in the community—all of which were rated above 75% for both users and Non-Users. Transparency around OPL's decisions and operations was the category with which both users and Non-Users had the lowest level of trust, as well as the highest level of uncertainty ("I don't know") in that process (by almost double the next category). The majority of respondents (65% of users, and 60% of Non-Users) nevertheless trusted OPL to be transparent. What this tells us is that clients and the general public may not know how decisions about and for the library are made, but are still overall very trusting of OPL.

13. Do you know where your local branch of Ottawa Public Library is?

Multiple Choice
(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Active Users
- No 1%
- Yes 99%
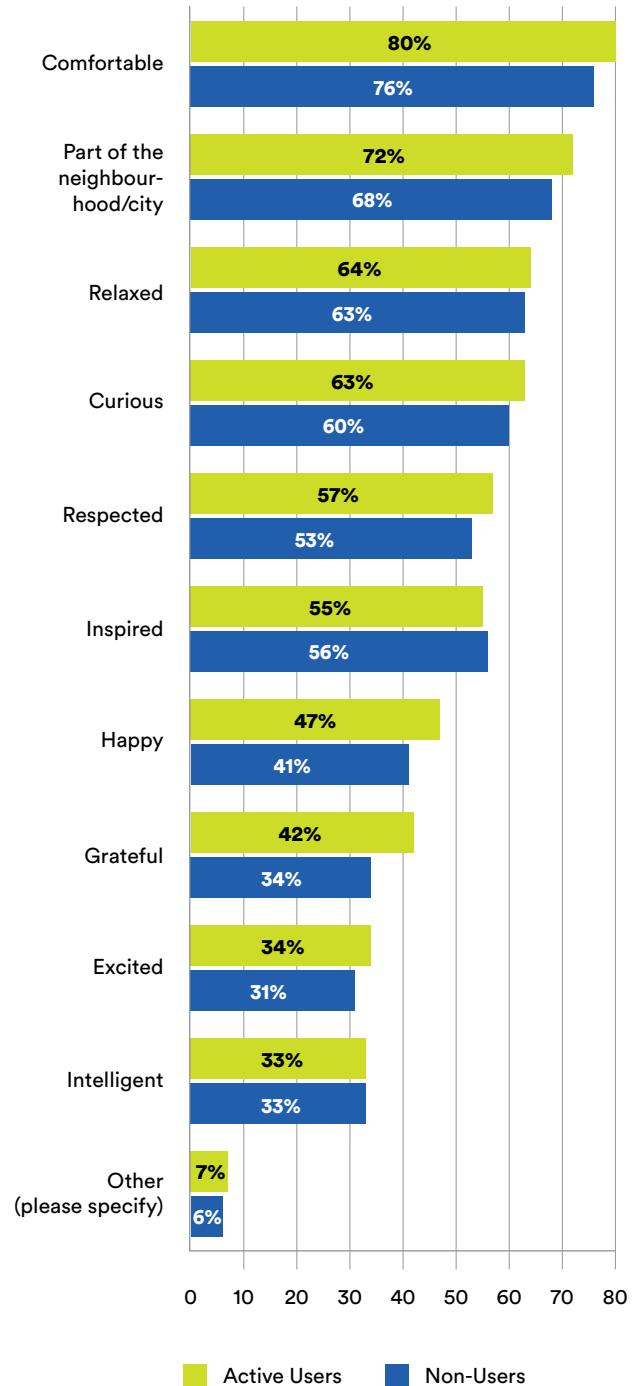
Non-Users
- No 13%
- Yes 87%
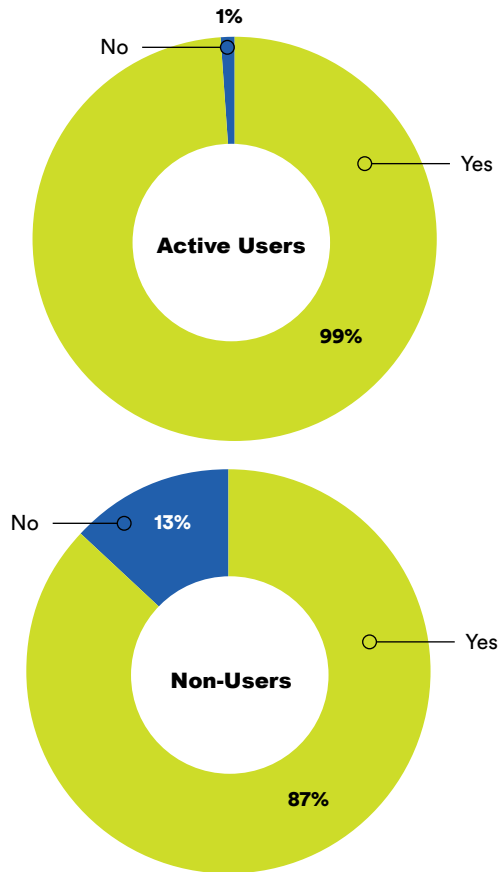
Analysis

The vast majority of both users and Non-Users know where their local branch is. Only 13% of Non-Users, and 1% of users did not. This tells us that there is excellent awareness of the library in general by citizens of Ottawa, and that the library is a well-known institution, in the same way that city hall, or a police station may be.

14. How should Ottawa Public Library make you feel?

Checkboxes (Select top three answers); Written Response
(Active Users N = 17,168) | (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Comfortable	80%	76%
Part of the neighbour-hood/city	72%	68%
Relaxed	64%	63%
Curious	63%	60%
Respected	57%	53%
Inspired	55%	56%
Happy	47%	41%
Grateful	42%	34%
Excited	34%	31%
Intelligent	33%	33%
Other (please specify)	7%	6%

■ Active Users   ■ Non-Users

Analysis

Comfort ranked high for all survey respondents, as did feeling relaxed while in an OPL branch. It was also evident that libraries do significant work in making citizens feel like a part of their community.

Interestingly, being inspired by or feeling inspired while visiting the library was ranked higher by Non-Users than by Active Users. Capturing the inspirational nature of a library is worth considering for any future branding.

There were 1,343 written responses to this question. 110 people said "All of the above" (only 8 said "None of the above"). The word that received the most written responses was "Welcome" (or "Welcomed"), with 289 responses. Almost all of those who wrote "welcome" wrote only that, so it is difficult to glean whether or not they believe the library is already a welcoming place, or should be more welcoming. "Safe" was the next highest response, appearing 145 times. Those who used "safe" or some version of it in their response were split evenly between: the library being a place where they can or do already feel safe and; the library should be a place of safety (where it may not currently be). Other notable responses:

- Informed (65)
- Supported (49)

15. Listed below are some current Ottawa Public Library services and reasons people use Ottawa Public Library. Which of these were you already aware of?

Checkboxes (Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)
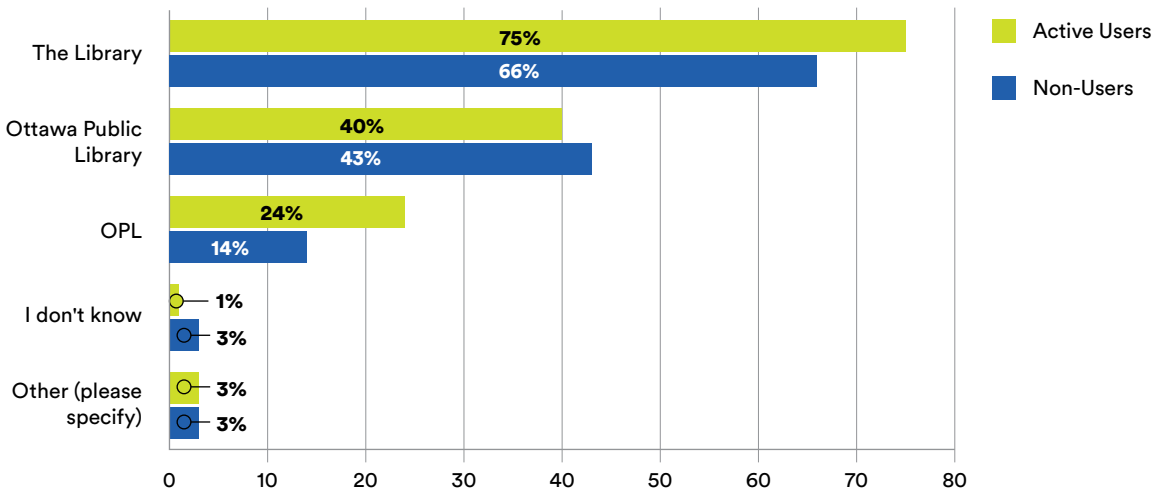
Analysis

It should be no surprise that both Active Users and Non-Users were by-and-large aware that OPL had books, ebooks, movies and other media, and music to borrow. Nor is it surprising that most users are aware that one can bring children to events and learning activities, attend events themselves, or get passes for various venues (though there is some divergence there). We also don't believe that it is surprising that the vast majority of all respondents didn't know that telescopes were available to borrow. We think that the key takeaway from this survey question is that OPL has an extensive breadth of services, many of which are little known to both Non-Users, as well as Active Users. While it would not be reasonable to assume that all clients would know about all services, we see this as an excellent opportunity to outline this service breadth with all OPL clients.

Activity	Active Users	Non-Users
Borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks books	85%	69%
Borrow print books and books on CD	83%	74%
Borrow movies and TV shows (on DVD and streaming)	79%	63%
Bring children to events and learning programs	74%	62%
Borrow music (CDs or streaming)	73%	55%
Attend events and learning programs	66%	50%
Borrow access passes to museums, parks, ski trails, etc.	59%	36%
Suggest books the library should offer in its collection	53%	35%
Rent library meeting rooms	51%	37%
Use online learning tools and databases	50%	43%
Borrow video games	47%	33%
Borrow musical instruments	29%	14%
Borrow book club kits and bundles of pre-selected children's books	27%	15%
Use the mobile printing service	25%	20%
Use or learn to use creative tools (sewing machines, 3D printers, music editing station, laser cutters, etc.)	22%	14%
Book a one-on-one consultation with a staff member	15%	10%
Borrow specialty items, such as carbon dioxide monitors and thermal cameras	13%	8%
Watch recorded library events on the Ottawa Public Library YouTube channel	9%	9%
Borrow telescopes	9%	4%
Use a digitization and conversionlab to digitize VHS cassette tapes, 8mm, and Super 8mm film	8%	6%

Active Users ■ Non-Users

16. What name do you use when referring to Ottawa Public Library?

Checkboxes; Written Response (Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Chart: The Library — Active Users 75%, Non-Users 66%
Ottawa Public Library — Active Users 40%, Non-Users 43%
OPL — Active Users 24%, Non-Users 14%
I don't know — Active Users 1%, Non-Users 3%
Other (please specify) — Active Users 3%, Non-Users 3%

Legend: Active Users, Non-Users

French Language Naming Conventions

As a bilingual organization, respondents who completed the survey in French were provided with French-language versions of the naming conventions from which to select. Those who took the French language survey responded with the following naming preferences:

(Active User N = 1,055) | (Non-User N = 57)

Chart: La bibliothèque — Active Users 72%, Non-Users 61%
Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa — Active Users 40%, Non-Users 40%
BPO — Active Users 14%, Non-Users 16%
Je ne sais pas — Active Users 0%, Non-Users 4%
Autre(veuillez préciser) — Active Users 5%, Non-Users 2%

Legend: Active Users, Non-Users
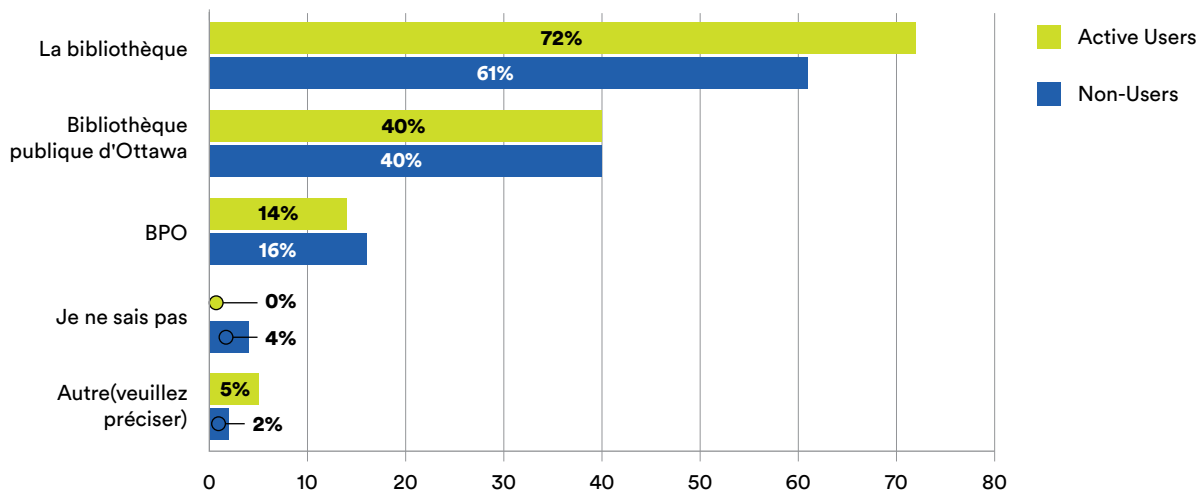
Analysis

Regardless of the language, Active Users were more likely to refer to OPL simply as "the Library" ("La bibliothèque"), by 20% – 35%. We suspect this difference is due to the familiarity that users would have with OPL, choosing to use less formal naming conventions when referring to the library. Ottawa Public Library was the second choice for both users and Non-Users.

Notes

This question also allowed for a written option. More than 150 respondents to the English survey said they refer to it as the "Ottawa Library," with the majority of the remaining responses referring to their home branch. In the French survey, there were 56 written responses, of which 28 of them contained either "Biblio" or "Bibli."

Analysis

Overall, 97% of all respondents either had, or shared an OPL card (Non-Users: 72% Yes, 2% Share a card; Users: 97% Yes, 2% Share a card). Notably, Active Users were about 25% more likely to have a card themselves than Non-Users; getting more cards into circulation is likely to lead to increased library usage.

17. Do you have a card for the Ottawa Public Library?

Multiple Choice (N = 17,168) (N = 1,507)

We share a card
2%
1%
No
Yes
Active Users
97%

We share a card
2%
No
Yes
26%
Non-Users
72%

18. Have you used Ottawa Public Library in-person or online in the past year?

Multiple Choice (Active Users 17,168) (Non-Users 1,507)

This question was how Active Users and Non-Users were split—those who answered "Yes" are referred to as Users, and those who answered "No" are Non-Users. The split is as follows:

Note

As previously mentioned, the above numbers reflect only those who answered this question—each subsequent response's N should be consulted for a clearer understanding of how many respondents answered that particular question.

3.4.2—Questions asked only of those identified as Active Users

Section Notes

Please note that for clarity, we have reset the question numbers in this, and the following section. Because the survey was split, numbering would become difficult to follow otherwise.

In this section, "respondents" refers exclusively to Active Users, unless otherwise noted.

1. How often do you use Ottawa Public Library?

Multiple Choice (N = 16,925)
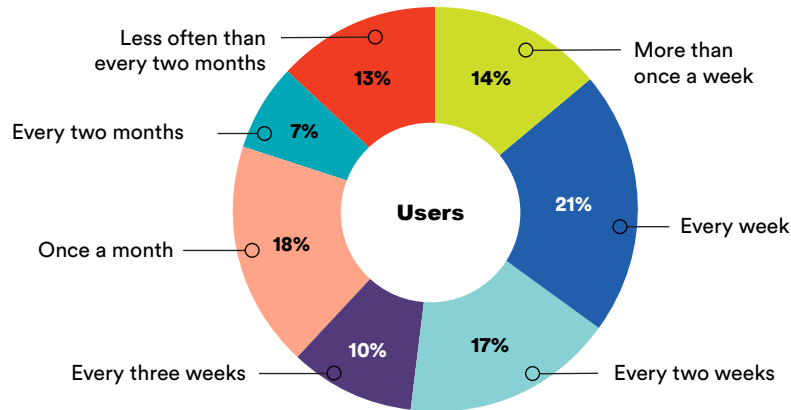
This question has been omitted from this section of the report, which focuses more on the OPL brand.

Responses to this, and all questions can be found in the appendix.

2. Would you consider Ottawa Public Library as a place to:
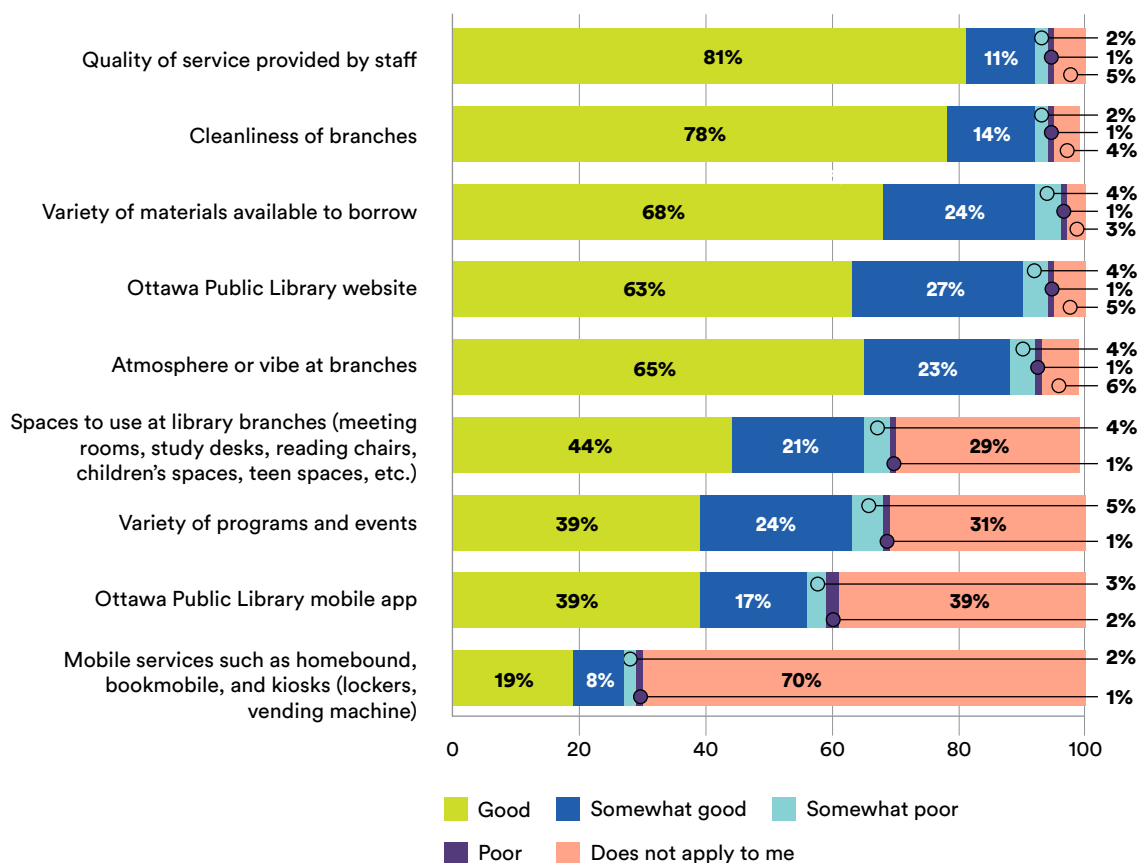
Multiple Choice (Ratings Matrix) (N = 16,925)

	Yes	No	Does not apply to me
Get answers to questions	73%	17%	11%
Sit and relax	70%	19%	11%
Find leisure and cultural activities	57%	27%	16%
Study	57%	9%	34%
Have a meeting	39%	33%	28%
Collaborate with a group of people	38%	34%	28%
People watch	30%	46%	24%
Find activities and material for my children	50%	5%	45%
Meet new people	25%	53%	22%
Hang out with friends	19%	56%	26%
Get homework help	22%	19%	58%
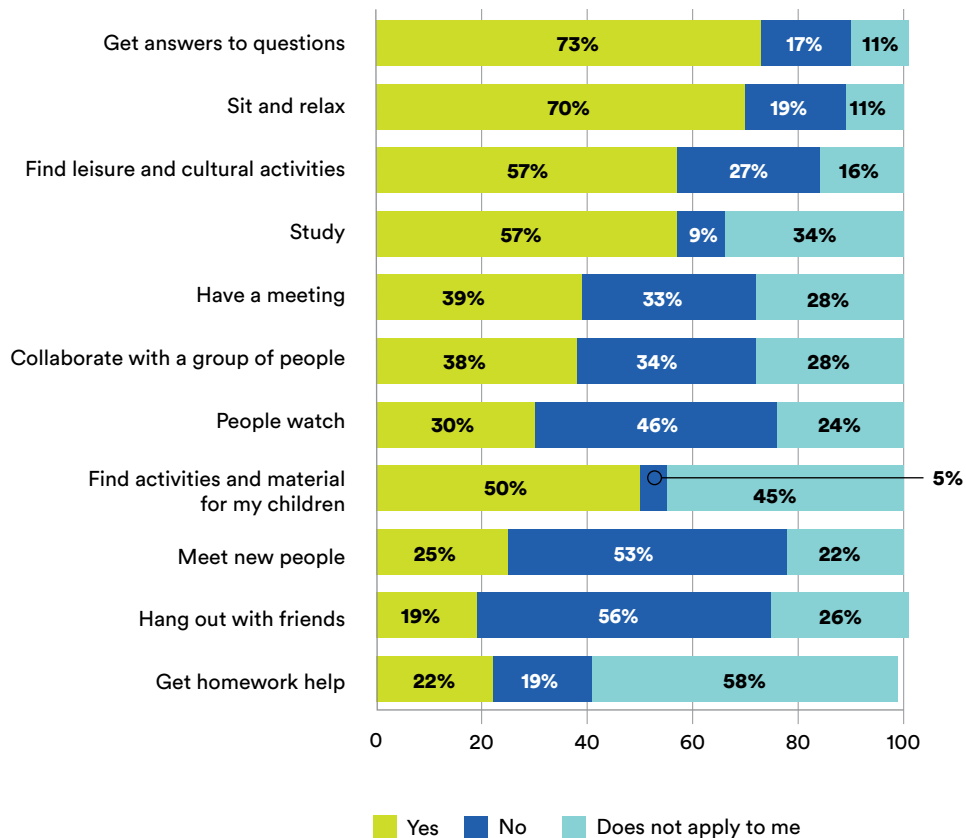
Analysis

Most respondents feel that the library is a place to get their questions answered, to sit and relax, find leisure and cultural activities, and to study. This is interesting as the four top answers are so varied—it is clear that users believe that OPL is a place to get a variety of things done. This is a great example of how the breadth of services being offered to clients are being used and appreciated differently across all users.

On the lower end of the spectrum, we find "Hang out with friends", which had both the lowest "Yes" rate at 19%, as well as the highest "No" at 56%. Coupled with "Meet new people" also scoring low (25% "Yes"; 53% "No"), and we can again see that the library is not seen to have a particularly strong social aspect.

3. How would you rate the following:

Multiple Choice (Ratings Matrix) (N = 16,925)

	Good	Somewhat good	Somewhat poor	Poor	Does not apply to me
Quality of service provided by staff	81%	11%		1% 2%	5%
Cleanliness of branches	78%	14%		1% 2%	4%
Variety of materials available to borrow	68%	24%		1% 4%	3%
Ottawa Public Library website	63%	27%		1% 4%	5%
Atmosphere or vibe at branches	65%	23%		1% 4%	6%
Spaces to use at library branches (meeting rooms, study desks, reading chairs, children's spaces, teen spaces, etc.)	44%	21%		1% 4%	29%
Variety of programs and events	39%	24%		1% 5%	31%
Ottawa Public Library mobile app	39%	17%		2% 3%	39%
Mobile services such as homebound, bookmobile, and kiosks (lockers, vending machine)	19%	8%		1% 2%	70%

Legend: Good · Somewhat good · Somewhat poor · Poor · Does not apply to me

Analysis

People see OPL staff, cleanliness, variety of materials, the website, and atmosphere as a very positive part of the experience of visiting a branch—each of which scored close to, or above 90%. Notably, there was a very low response rate for the two dissatisfied responses ("Somewhat poor" and "Poor") across all categories, meaning that by and large, the community have overall positive associations with OPL.

4. What do you like and value most about Ottawa Public Library?

Written Response (N = 14,280)

Analysis

This question had a wide variety of answers, which we have broken down into categories that received the most responses:

Variety and Selection

Users thought that the variety and availability of resources was excellent. 11,445 users mentioned the ability to borrow (1562), ability to place items on hold (647), and the variety and selection of books, audiobooks, and ebooks (6548), and the collection and resources (2688).

Free

1643 mentioned the library as a free resource as their most valued OPL quality.

Everything

1083 respondents said that everything about the library was their favourite.

Kids

738 respondents said that kids (including "children") programming, spaces, and resources were their favourite thing about OPL.

Accessibility

498 users mentioned "accessibility," "access," or "accessible." This category mentioned accessibility as a positive both from a proximity standpoint, as well as a physical accessibility perspective.

Quiet

Including words like "quiet" (254), "calm" (77), "peace/ful" (70), "relaxing" (97), users saw the library as a place to relax and unwind. 498 respondents are included in this category.

5. What are your favourite things about Ottawa Public Library?

Checkboxes; Written Response (N = 16,925)

Category	Percentage
It's free	87%
The wide variety of books and other items to borrow	77%
Open to everyone	68%
Convenient location	64%
Online services	54%
It's quiet	44%
An organization I can trust	43%
Help is available	41%
I can learn new things	37%
It makes me feel like I'm a part of the community	36%
I can find something new or surprising to me	35%
A place I can spend time	33%
Interesting events and programs	22%
It's full of life	12%
I can be around other people	10%
Interacting with others	8%
Other (please specify)	4%

Analysis

"It's free" was the number one response for this question, which is in line with previous responses on OPL's value (Question #2 in section one, and Question #4 in this section) that placed "free" as an important feature of the library. Other top responses include the variety of books, that it is open to everyone, and that it is conveniently located. We must bear in mind throughout this report that the concept of "free" and the way users think about interacting with the collection (such as in Question #4) are closely linked. People value the breadth and depth of the collection, but the value that borrowing from the collection is free must not be overlooked.

On the bottom end of responses (those that fall below 22%) are "Interacting with others," "I can be around other people," and "It's full of life," all of which are to do with social interaction. This tells us that people aren't seeing the library as a social gathering space, and though they somewhat believe that it makes them feel a part of the community (36%), it is not necessarily because of the social interactions with others that can happen in branch.

This question also had a written option, which had 678 total responses, with some similarities across a few categories:

Books

Books are a highlight of the library, with 126 respondents mentioning them—159 if you add "read" or "reading".

Children

65 respondents said that children's programming and play spaces were their favourite part of OPL. Respondents in this category also said that engaging children early in learning was important to them.

Other notable responses

- Free (43)
- Access (42)
- Community (23)

6. Do you recommend Ottawa Public Library to family and friends?

Written Response (N = 16,925)

This question has been omitted from this section of the report, which focuses more on the OPL brand. Responses to this, and all questions can be found in the appendix.

7. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Written Response (N = 4,453)

Analysis

4,453 people opted to add a final thought to their survey (before the demographic questions).

There was no clear through line in these responses, and it is our recommendation that OPL spend time to review all of these responses. They are incredibly diverse, and are all important and considered responses to the question that bear review by OPL.

We believe that a review of these responses—which includes both positive and negative feedback (though substantially more positive feedback)—will be helpful and in many cases inspiring for OPL.

3.4.3—Questions asked only of those identified as Non-Users

Section Notes

Please note that for clarity, we have reset the question numbers in this, and the following section. Because the survey was split, numbering would become difficult to follow otherwise.

In this section, "respondents" refers exclusively to Non-Users, unless otherwise noted.

1. How do you remember feeling when you went to a public library?

Checkboxes (N = 1,465)

Feeling	%
Relaxed	49%
Peaceful	40%
Curious	40%
Happy	38%
Excited	26%
Overwhelmed	9%
I don't remember	8%
Confused	7%
Frustrated	6%
Stressed	4%
Afraid	2%
I've never been to a public library	2%
Other (please specify)	7%
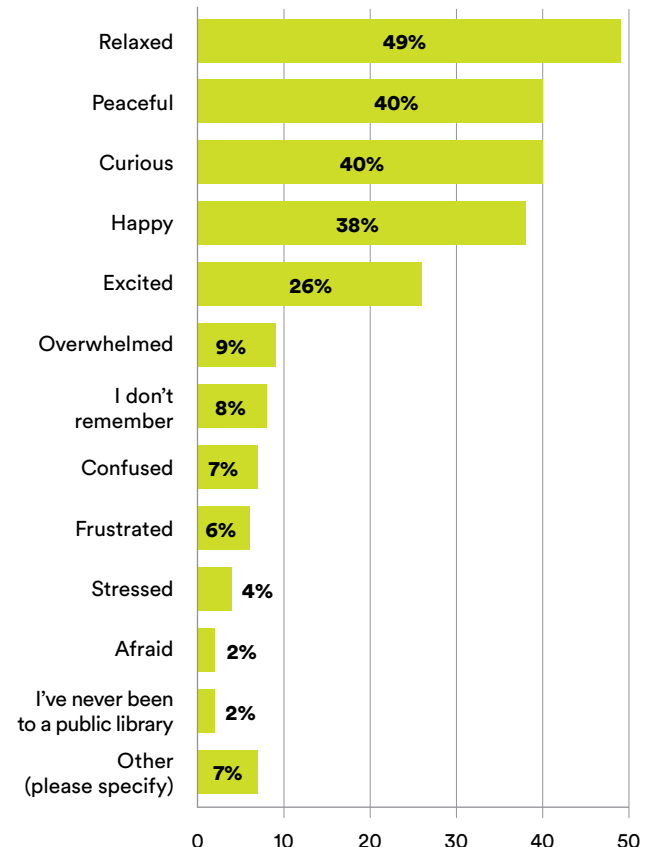
2. Why?

Written Response (N = 1040)

Analysis

Almost all associations in this response were positive. They ranged from a love of books (now and in the past; about 200 responses) to a sense of calm and relaxation (approximately 70 responses, which is echoed in the question itself, which has "Relaxed" and "Peaceful" taking the top two spots, along with "Curious"). There were also a number of responses about a love of, or a desire to be around books (206). While there were several other general categories of responses, none exceeded 50 total responses, so they have not been outlined here. That said, the vast majority of responses were musings on the past, and the (again, generally positive) sentiment towards the library they grew up with.

3. How many years has it been since you used Ottawa Public Library in person or online?

Multiple Choice (N = 1,465)
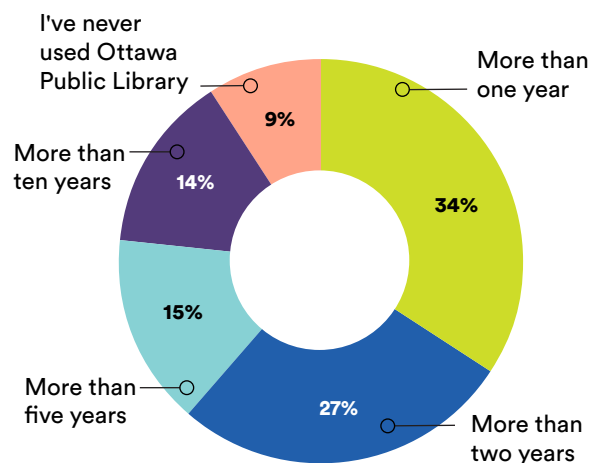
Analysis

Almost a quarter Non-User of respondents had a longer than ten-year attendance gap to OPL, with the remaining three quarters having visited a branch, or used services within the last ten years.

4. Why do you not use Ottawa Public Library now?

Checkboxes (Check all that apply); Written Response (N = 1,465)
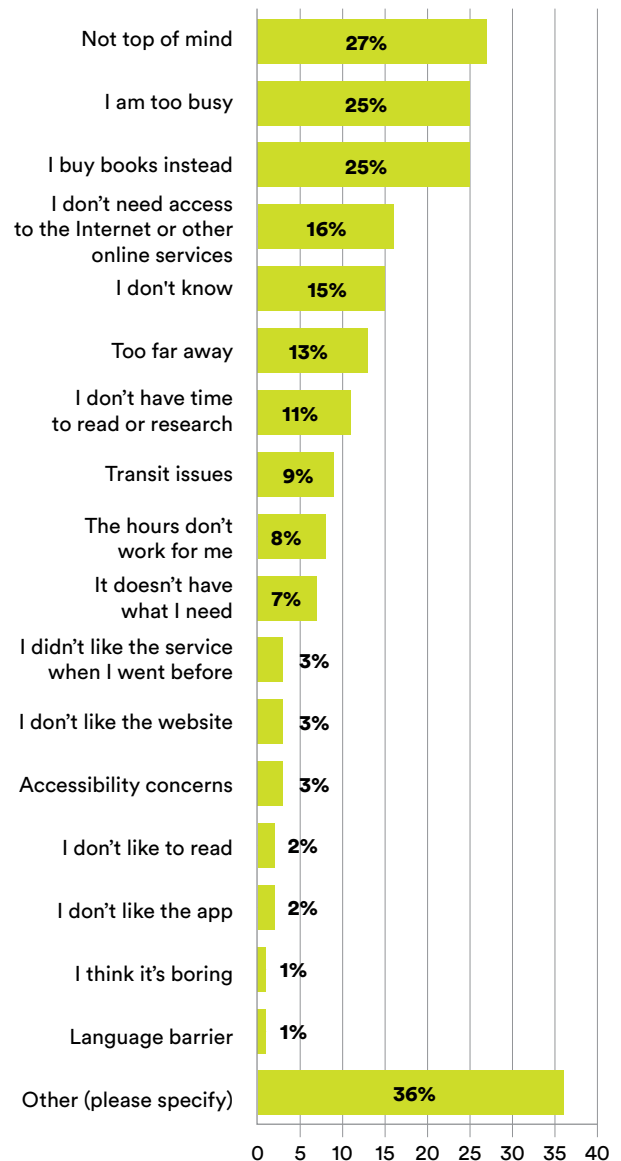
Analysis

Most Non-Users simply didn't think of, or have time to visit an OPL branch. An equal percentage preferred to buy books instead of borrowing them. While any tactic is unlikely to sway most of those who prefer to buy books to come to an OPL branch, there is an excellent opportunity to bring

OPL to the forefront of the minds of Ottawans. Adding messaging and tactics to persuade those who don't think they have time to visit (by pushing holds on books, or the ease of finding materials, especially online, for example) should be strongly considered in the strategic phase.

For the written responses (those who selected "Other please specify," of which there were 523), many respondents elaborated on why they didn't have time, or that they were members of University libraries, and used them instead. There were a (statistically small) number of respondents who wrote that they haven't come back because their late fees are too high and that they're worried that they couldn't afford to repay them. This, coupled with the nearly one third of all survey respondents who were unaware that late fees had been waived, and we can see that there is work to be done to more thoroughly deliver that message.

There were still others who felt that there were no available services for them, or that they had difficulty accessing or understanding them.

Note

When cross-referencing this question with the previous question "How many years has it been since you used Ottawa Public Library in person or online," we can see that no matter the distance in time since their last visit, respondents had the same top three answers: Not top of mind, I buy books instead, and I'm too busy. None of these responses indicate a problem with OPL as a place or as an organization, nor do they reflect poor perception of OPL from Non-Users. This reinforces our belief in the opportunity to get these Non-Users back to the library.

5. Where do you get your reading material?

Checkboxes; Written Response (N = 1,465)
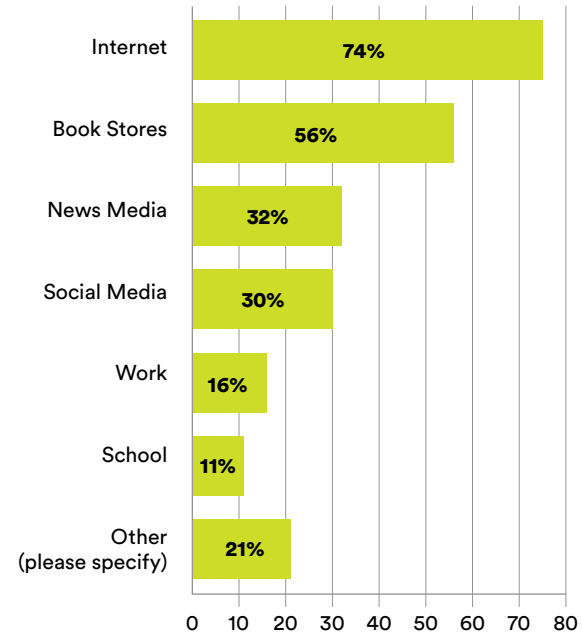
Analysis

74% of respondents said that the internet was the source of their reading materials, with "Book stores" in the second spot. This represents a fantastic opportunity for OPL to convert these Non-Users by enticing them to borrow, rather than buy books—while converting all 700+ who responded this way is likely not possible, it is clear that they are still reading books, so OPL may have what they are looking for specifically.

There were 301 written responses to this question, and by a wide margin (about 34%), respondents said that they either swapped with friends, or otherwise acquired used books (from The Little Free Library, used book stores, or as discards when people left them out). A further 13% said that they primarily read using apps, which we think marks a great opportunity to spread wider the message that OPL can be used in tandem with most reading apps and readers that they may already own. The balance of responses was a mix between respondents who don't read at all, or that much, and those who primarily read newspapers or online publications.

6. Where do you get more information on topics that interest you?

(N = 1,465)
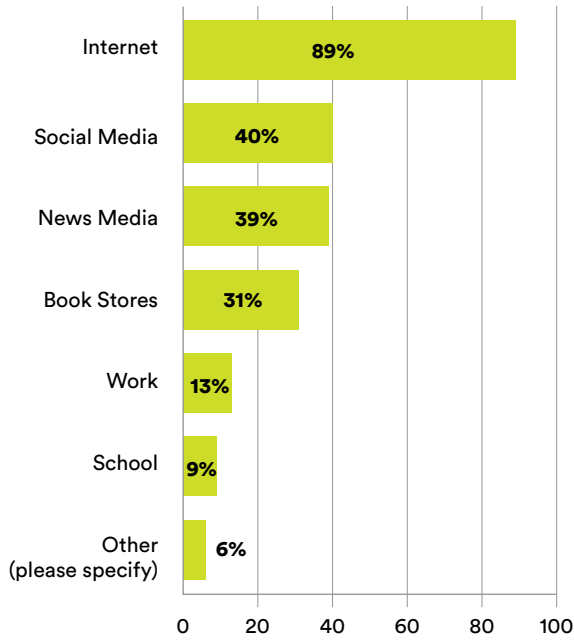
Analysis

Most Non-Users (89%) again said that the internet was where they get their information. Second and a very close third were "Social media" and the "News media". Book stores were slightly behind in fourth, but well behind (by about two-thirds or −58%) the top response. Given that most Non-Users get their information and topics that interest them on the internet already, we believe that this represents an opportunity to further push OPL's online services and catalogue, not to replace their current usage, but to supplement portions of it. That is, giving people an opportunity to engage with OPL while they're already using their primary source of information acquisition would be ideal.

There were 93 written responses to this question, of which 21 (22.5%) said "Library" as their source of information. This is an interesting response from so many people, given that these respondents haven't been to OPL within the last year. We can only surmise that they are referring to other

libraries, or libraries at their Universities and Colleges. Other notable responses included other online resources such as Wikipedia, Google, and their handheld devices in general.

7. Do you think Ottawa Public Library is a place to go during "down time" in the same way a park or coffee shop is?

Multiple Choice; Written Response (N = 1,465)
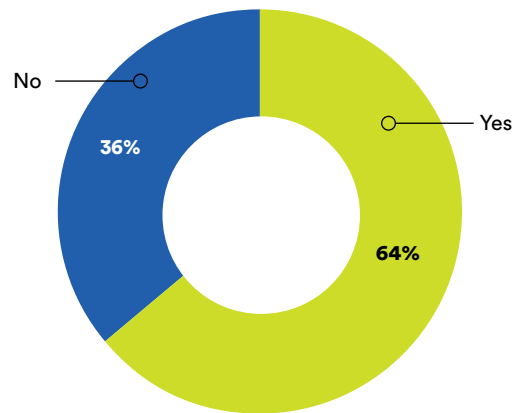
Analysis

Most respondents (64%) thought that the library was a place to visit during down time. Those that did not were asked to submit a written response explaining their answer. These responses were varied, but could be roughly fit into two categories:

Coffee

A total of 133 respondents said that you can't eat or drink in a library, which prevents them from treating it in the same way. 91 of those respondents mentioned coffee specifically.

Atmosphere

About 76 respondents mentioned that the vibe, or atmosphere didn't match that of a coffee shop or café. This included responses that said you can't relax (23) in the same way you can at a café, or that libraries required quiet (33).

Note

There were many varied responses to this question, with no other consistent responses we could see. As is evident above, even when there was alignment in responses to this question, none represented even 10% of total written responses.

8. If you use places other than the library for study, work, information, or leisure, why do you choose them and not Ottawa Public Library?

Written Response (N = 964)

Analysis

Of the 964 written responses, 108 were due to "convenience"—the idea that the internet and being at home was more convenient than going to the library; 161 were about food (including "coffee", "snacks", "eat" etc.) with most noting that food and drink aren't allowed in the library; and many were about atmosphere in general. It should be noted that most responses were about how other places better suited their needs, rather than faults that they found at OPL branches.

Note

Approximately 100 respondents to this question wrote some version of "N/A", "not applicable", or "no comment".

9. I would use Ottawa Public Library if:

Written Response (N = 1,006)

Analysis

Proximity

118 respondents said that they would use OPL if it were closer to where they lived. This included responses about being unable to get to a branch.

Time

107 respondents said that they simply didn't have time to visit the library. A further 24 mentioned

the library's hours as being a factor in their inability to visit.

Coffee

Here again, about 87 people mentioned that if the library had coffee, snacks, food etc., and it was appropriate to consume them in a branch, they would be more inclined to come.

10. Do you consider the public library important to the community?

Multiple Choice (N = 1,456)
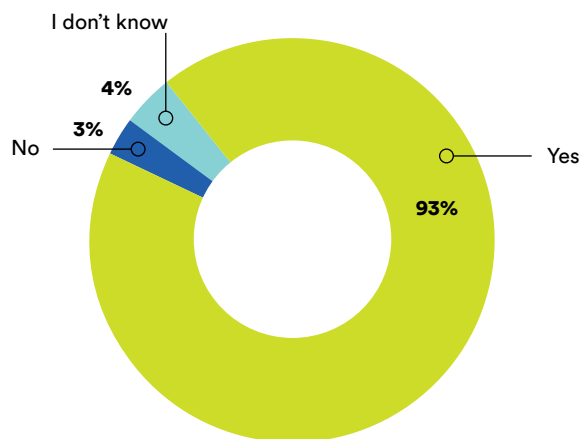
Analysis

Overwhelmingly (93%), Non-Users thought that a library is important to the community. This is excellent as a benchmark headed into the next phase of this process, as it means that there is already buy-in from the vast majority even of those who don't use the library regularly. There is also an opportunity to convert those especially in the "I don't know" category, who may simply not know the full value a library brings to the community at large.

3.5—Key survey insights and themes from the public survey

The public survey gave significant insight into how OPL is perceived by the community. Key takeaways from the survey include:

Valuable

Ottawa Public Library, and libraries in general, are seen as valuable to the community. OPL is highly valued among Ottawans, even those who don't regularly interact with OPL.

Unaware of the personal benefit

Lapsed and Non-Users aren't avoiding the library, nor are they against visiting; the vast majority of users have a variety of psychological barriers—too busy lifestyle, not interested in reading, too impatient to wait for hot titles to become available, or don't fully understand the scope of services that may be available and relevant to them.

Trusted

The Ottawa community is keen to participate in activities that pertain to OPL—18,000+ responses to the public survey is a staggering number. This engagement shows a high level of trust for OPL as an institution and its staff, as shown in the survey results. Additionally, on the specific question around trust, our external stakeholders overwhelmingly told us that they trust OPL in regards to several different aspects (foster literacy, welcome everyone, help kids to learn and grow, etc.)

Recognizable

The Ottawa Public Library visual identity is recognized by most Ottawans, with some misattribution to the City of Ottawa's logo; the OPL slogan is less recognized, though it appears on every library card that has been issued in the last 10 years.

Quality

Both users and Non-Users believe that OPL has a wide array of quality programming and services, though books are still the mainstay, and the primary thing associated with the library.

Audiences

Teens are not currently viewed as a demographic that most benefits from OPL. External audiences see OPL particularly benefiting young children, those with low income, seniors, and students. Interestingly, these results were consistent across Active Users and Non-Users

Comfortable

The community wants OPL to be a comfortable, welcoming space, open to all. Most community members already believe this to be true of the library.

3.6—Overall external insights and themes

Access

In the external interviews, the term "access" was defined in three ways:

1. As a public space that feels welcoming, comfortable and inclusive to all.
2. As a place that meets community needs by offering accessible resources.
3. As a place that has accessible facilities and is responsive to people with disabilities.

External stakeholders feel OPL is making progress on all three fronts, with more work to do in promoting and highlighting its accessibility to the public.

Partnership

Other community organizations are enthusiastic about partnering with OPL.
Community organizations are interested in partnering with OPL to be a strong presence in all communities and increase library usage.

Audiences

External stakeholders feel OPL currently benefits students, seniors, young children, and those with low income.

Targeted promotions

Building awareness
Community organizations feel targeted marketing will help build awareness.

Not top-of-mind among Non-Users

Those who are not using the library largely say that it is not part of their routine or they are "too busy." Many do not realize or fully understand what OPL can offer them. Teenagers are seen as a demographic who need to be (re-)introduced to the OPL brand, its services, and its programs.

Trust

The public trusts OPL as a public institution and its staff when accessing what they believe to be quality programming and services. A high response to the public survey shows that the public generally sees OPL as a very trustworthy and reliable organization.

Visual identity

The OPL visual identity is recognized by most Ottawans, with some connecting it to the City of Ottawa. The OPL slogan is less recognized.

4.0—Final Insights and Analysis

The aim of the engagement was to answer three questions:

4. How is Ottawa Public Library perceived?

5. Where are the perceived gaps in messaging and understanding of OPL and its services?

6. What is OPL doing well?

The following insights and analysis serve to answer these questions.

4.1—How is Ottawa Public Library perceived?

The following sections outline the overall perceptions of OPL from our various audiences identifying where internal and external clients converged and diverged in their perceptions.

4.1.1—Convergences

All stakeholder groups perceive the library in the following manner:

Connection
Across all stakeholder groups, the concept that OPL provides and inspires connection of various forms (in-person, digitally, through programs, etc.) came through repeatedly across all research methodologies. Importantly however, external audiences clearly told us social connections— i.e., that the library is a place to hang out and socialize—was not seen as important or relevant. However, in these times of increased isolation, work from home, and ever-expanding digital intrusion into our lives, the research, across all methodologies, was clear—people see OPL as a place (or concept) for connection to various elements—technology, knowledge, community, activities, resources, and more.

OPL is integral to the community
Across all stakeholder groups, OPL's role in the community, as well as the manner in which it promotes and creates community, was a key shared perception. Whether people visit the library or not, it is clear that OPL is a key component of Ottawa life. Additionally, we heard from community service organizations that clearly told us they see OPL as a potentially significant organization to help their clients/

audiences feel more connected to the community of Ottawa. It is clear that OPL is a vital institution and hub for all Ottawans, both old and new.

Staff are highly valued and trusted
All stakeholder groups, across all methodologies, confirmed that OPL staff are viewed as experts. The Board and management are highly complementary of the staff indicating that they deliver quality service, and have a warm, client-based approach. The public survey ranked the trust they have in OPL staff highly, referring to their ability to foster literacy and help their children learn and grow. There is a clear sense from both users and Non-Users that library staff are exceptional, and they are vital to the success of the library, and that their service is exceptional.

Breadth of service
All stakeholder groups acknowledged the breadth and depth of services and programming on offer at OPL. In our workshop discussions, with library staff and managers, there was the strong feeling amongst participants that "OPL is more than just books" or that people need to see what OPL offers "beyond books."

Books are the mainstay of the library
While perhaps obvious, books and access to them is the number one thing people associate with a library. In our workshop discussions, library staff and managers expressed how much OPL has to offer in its services, programming and large collections in addition to books. However, what is obvious (and what should come as no surprise) from our surveys, in particular the public survey, is that books continue to be a mainstay of the library. For many Canadians, even if they use the breadth of services available at their library, books will always be synonymous with public libraries.

Visual identity
The survey results indicate that the OPL visual identity can be confused/conflated with the City of Ottawa visual identity. Internal stakeholders state the connection as a fact, with some indicating the connection is not necessary because OPL is a separate entity from the City.

OPL is a unique public space
The Ottawa community sees OPL as a unique space—free, with a wide array of services and resources, and a uniquely calm space in the city. Both users and Non-Users saw OPL as a place to come and simply "be"—somewhere unlike anywhere else in the city. Both user groups saw significant value in a space that was free, which had no expectation of purchase.

Desire to be more bold
Internal stakeholders believe that OPL is not loud enough with its promotions and communications, and that there is a requirement for more communications and campaigns. The individual Non-User interviews validated that OPL is not "part of their routine," two seniors indicating that they do not know what the library can offer them. As well, the immigrant organizations feel marketing and promotions directed to community groups will help build awareness. Finally, most who are Non-Users don't visit simply because OPL is not top of mind, which indicates that more could be done to keep OPL in their mind.

Who benefits most from the library
All stakeholder groups agreed that young children, those with low income, as well as retired people and seniors benefit the most from OPL. There was some divergence in the degree to which each of those groups benefited, but they were all among the top five for all user groups. All user groups felt that teens were amongst the

least likely to benefit from OPL, which aligns with the Board's feeling that teens represent a potential area of growth. Newcomers to Canada and teen audiences were singled out in particular by internal stakeholders as target audiences.

A welcoming public space
All stakeholder groups stated that OPL is a free public space. This makes OPL a unique space in Ottawa as a free public institution that offers a broad range of services and resources for everyone. While external audiences did not see OPL as a café alternative (i.e., a place to hang out), they do understand that a public library is a welcoming and free public space for all.

4.1.2—Divergences

The following describes the differences in perceptions between internal and external groups:

Top Benefit

Internal stakeholders including management and staff feel that OPL being completely free is the top benefit or value to users. However, external stakeholders indicated in the survey that they value the collections most. This may speak to the theme that the public inherently understands that access to the collection is free, so while it appears on the surface a divergence, there may be contextual convergence on these two key divergent themes.

This is an interesting and key point, external audiences see OPL's top value as "Books and more", while internal audiences are more focused on OPL as a free community resource.

Library experience

While OPL's strategic direction specifies a redefinition of the library experience and the creation of the central branch as a "destination," stakeholders told us that this idea of the library as a destination to socialize/hang out was not widely accepted. Our external audience research

activities clearly indicated that the library—while seen as a relaxing, comfortable, and calm destination—is primarily a destination for active, or single-action tasks such as borrowing from the collection or participating in programming. In another divergence, stakeholders clearly told us they placed a high value on OPL's ability to create a sense of community and connection, but again, our research tells us that branches are active, purpose-driven locations, rather than places to go to make social connections, or spend leisure time. As a result, it is key for us to not diminish the importance of the books in our collection, reframing "Beyond Books" to "Books and more."

Brand and Visual Identity

There are internal stakeholders who feel OPL's visual identity is too linked to the City of Ottawa brand; especially since OPL is a separate entity from the City. However, when polled, external stakeholders did not overwhelmingly confirm if this linkage causes confusion as some internal stakeholders suggest. There was some overlap in the survey responses, but not in the majority. For the overall brand, internal stakeholders told us they felt OPL was stodgy, bureaucratic and institutional referring to the personality of the brand. This sentiment was not shared by external stakeholders.

Awareness of fines and fees

Internal stakeholders and the majority of Active Users understand that OPL no longer charges late fines for overdue materials. . Non-users are less clear about this. This is a communications challenge, but directly relates to both brand perception as well as library usage.

4.3—Gaps in Messaging and Understanding

Intent has identified the following gaps where OPL needs to take further action to better understand why the gap is there and what can be done to

reduce it. These will also be addressed in the brand strategy to be produced in phase two.

Audience segmentation

It is believed across internal stakeholders that OPL could do a better job of segmenting and targeting various audiences and demographics, to help various groups of people better understand what OPL's value is to them.

OPL has an opportunity to build awareness and usage

Internal stakeholders have a great sense of pride in OPL and believe that OPL's services, collections, programming, and technology offerings should be promoted more. The Board, management and staff believe that a lack of promotion results in the general public not fully realizing what OPL could offer them. The public survey results indicate that OPL has services, programming and collections that Non-Users and Active Users are not familiar with and there is an opportunity to outline this service breadth with all OPL clients.

Commitment to literacy

Internal stakeholders believe that OPL plays a pivotal role in literacy, defined as helping people develop and improve life skills. Staff and management believe the general public should better understand OPL's commitment to literacy, why that is important, and the many programs and services they offer people to help them better themselves.

Intellectual freedom

The protection and preservation of Intellectual Freedom came through clearly with internal stakeholders—staff, management, and the board. This strategic imperative was not echoed by external stakeholders, in fact, it barely came

up at all if ever. This tells us that OPL must do a better job of communicating this concept to the general public, and understanding the potential brand impacts associated with OPL's position on freedom of expression.

Community partnerships

Various stakeholder groups believe that there are opportunities being missed to partner with strategically chosen community organizations to bring more new audiences to OPL, and to help those audiences and organizations achieve their various goals.

4.4—What is OPL doing well?

Intent has identified areas where OPL is doing well. These are important considerations in building the brand strategy.

Value to the community

OPL is a pillar of the Ottawa community, and through their good work staff, community organizations and the (interested) public are fully engaged with the organization and wish to further engage in the future. This was clearly demonstrated by the incredible participation rates in the public survey, and was validated in our external interviews with community organizations.

Organizational trust

Trust was a strong theme with the public trusting OPL in all aspects of its work, and the way in which it disseminates information to the community. Across all research methodologies for all audiences, the theme of trust came through clearly.

Staff expertise

The staff are viewed as helpful and experts. This was confirmed in the public survey, as well as the internal workshops and interviews.

Unique public spaces

OPL provides free public spaces and services that are valuable to everyone in Ottawa. This was expressed in the Board, management and staff interviews as a value of OPL. In the public survey, the top four responses to "What are your favourite things about Ottawa Public Library?" refers to the fact that OPL is free, has a variety of books and other items to borrow, is open to everyone, and is conveniently located as their favourite things about OPL.

Variety

OPL's broad and deep catalogue, along with its diverse range of programs and services is well regarded and appreciated. Board, management and staff are proud of the programs and services that OPL offers. The public survey results indicate that both users and Non-Users believe OPL has a wide variety of materials in-branch, along with services and programs.

4.5—Recommendations

Throughout the analysis, Intent noted opportunities for OPL to consider, some of which may fall outside the scope of the brand project itself. These have been noted here as recommendations for consideration:

1. Due to our commitment to accurate representation, we recommend investing time and effort into further consultation with racialized and immigrant communities. We recommend OPL moves forward with a focus group/workshop that includes representatives from racialized and immigrant communities.

2. We strongly advise that OPL review written responses to "Users" question #7 ("Is there anything else you'd like to add?") as they are an excellent insight into the breadth of responses from clients. There are many

valuable notes, concerns, ideas, and kudos that should be reviewed by OPL. We additionally recommend reviewing written responses to "Non-User" question # 4 ("Why do you not use OPL now?") and contact those who have left their email addresses to explain to them that their late penalties have been forgiven, and that moving forward there will be no further penalties of this sort.

3. We recommend contacting those who have had difficulty accessing services to offer assistance, to lend an ear, or to otherwise let those lapsed customers know that OPL wants them to come back.

4. For all groups, we see an excellent opportunity to engage with them as best we can to inform them of policy changes that have no doubt happened since their last visit (i.e., late fines being eliminated), and to inform them of new products and services that are now on offer. Largely, we see everyone who has not visited recently as a target audience for future marketing.

5. Engage as many of the 15,000+ respondents as possible who left their email so the Library may contact them for further information regarding their responses and experiences with Ottawa Public Library.

5.0—Conclusion

Libraries are constantly evolving, responding to the needs of their community by offering programming and services to inform, inspire and (more and more) connect people. The pandemic underscored the value of the library as an essential service that offers support to people during times of crisis—specifically, the importance of connection.

This extensive research phase has given a deep well of insight from which to draw on in the development of the new OPL Brand Strategy.

Through this phase, we have uncovered several key takeaways that will form the pillars of our work for the remainder of this project, namely:

- OPL is a place for people to connect with a wide variety of programs, services, collections, and is seen as a partner in unifying and celebrating communities. There is potential and a willingness from other organizations to partner further.

- OPL has an opportunity to position itself as a strong supporter of intellectual freedom by being bold in its stance, and not compromising to external forces.

- OPL has a trusted, expert team with specialized skills in research, information finding, knowledge and literacy training. This team guides OPL clients in their experiences when coming to the library.

- Some people are not opposed to coming to the library; it is just not part of their mindset or daily routine. There needs to be a push to expand knowledge of what OPL offers so that people see the value in choosing to come to OPL when looking for enriching information or entertainment before other, fee-based alternatives.

- One of the more interesting observations was the continued importance of books to OPL's external audiences, which is the opposite of the strategic direction of many modern library systems. Instead of the phrase "Beyond Books" we recommend consideration of the phrase "Books and more".

- We know from other studies that when we increase the programs and services offered, system usage also increases, so while our audiences told us that books are the most important feature of OPL, our additional offerings increase participation and usage rates.

- Those who know and are well connected to OPL feel it can better promote itself, especially through direct engagement with individual demographic groups.

- The general public knows and trusts OPL, and thinks very highly of it.

The next phase in this work will be creating an authentic brand strategy that is deeply informed by the work done with OPL's stakeholders.

Appendix

Workshop Insights

Intent held 5 internal workshops with staff and the OPL management team. We also conducted 15 stakeholder interviews with the Board and senior management, in addition to 9 conversations with infrequent or Non-Users, including leaders from community organizations. The information detailed below reflects the findings of exercises in the workshop, along with conversations during these sections.

Who Is Ottawa Public Library

Adjective Shout-Out

In this exercise, participants shout out as many adjectives they can think of to describe OPL as it is today. The bolded words shown below are the words that participants gave most often. The bolded orange words are the adjectives that stakeholders felt best represented the category of similar words.

welcoming	creative space	unpredictable	comfortable
community	curious	warm	comforting
connected	educational	accountable	committed
diversity	engaging	advocates	complex
accessible	enthusiastic	affordable	conflicted
friendly	hidden gem	anonymous	**conservative**
innovative	intellectual	aspirational	consistent
literate	inviting	assistants to participants	content rich
safe space	meeting place	assistive	cost effective
bilingual	passionate	beautiful	culture or reading
democracy	people focused	**bureaucratic**	dedicated
forward thinking	relevant	big	**dependable**
free	resource	bold	disunited
fun	supportive	challenged	enriching
humble	sustainable	champion of social justice	entertaining
inclusive	teaching	chaotic	equitable
knowledge	top of mind	client-oriented	evolving
open	trusted	cohesive	excitement
reliable	**under valued**	collaborative	exploring
adaptable	**unappreciated**		family-friendly
complex	**unknown**		female dominated

freedom

frustrating

inconsistent

inefficient

inspiring

integrated

integrity

interesting

leaders

learning

lifelong learning

limited advancement for staff

magical

micro managed

neighborhood cornerstone

new ways of doing/learning

non judgment

not friendly

old/dated

open minded

openness

opportunity

outside comfort zone

overwhelmed

overworked

pandemic hangover vibe

partners

peaceful

poor signage

progressive

public engagement partners

publicly

quiet

reactive

responsive

rewarding

risk averse

sense of belonging

siloed

slow moving

stories

stuck

subversive

tech

tech savvy

too top down

transparent

understaffed

underused

unknown

value

well equipped

well funded

yearn to improve

The words above were top of mind for stakeholders, with welcoming and connected being very popular. Stakeholders view the word connected in different ways—as in, OPL connects them to resources, activities, services but especially to other people. OPL is where people find connections for free. The words highlighted in orange are words that reflect viewpoints that Intent consistently heard in the workshops and interviews—that OPL is bureaucratic, risk averse and conservative, and in many ways unknown or undervalued because many Ottawa residents do not realize what OPL has to offer.

Aspirational Adjectives

Following the adjective shout-out about the current state of the library, stakeholders shared words of what they'd like OPL to be viewed as:

Proactive	**Hip or cool**	**Unexpected**	Daring
Diverse	**Modern**	Leaders	**Fresh**
Innovative	Inclusive	Sustainable	**Fun**
Top of mind	Champion of social justice	Energetic	Really bilingual
Adaptable			

These aspirational words are the opposite of the negative sentiments noted above. This prompted a discussion about OPL being too traditional and risk averse. Stakeholders feel that OPL should be more bold and surprising, and should take a confident stand on societal issues. Stakeholders feel that OPL is seen as stodgy because it is located in a political town and therefore viewed as bureaucratic. They feel this is a misconception and ask the question, "how do we convey that we are not boring?"

Difference Statements

In this workshop exercise, we asked the groups to write a statement of 20 words or less about OPL. The following captures this input, highlighting the key themes that emerged between the responses. This exercise allows us to see what stakeholders feel are the differentiating factors of OPL and public libraries.

What we are

- An organization committed to improving literacy across Ottawa
- A place that inspires learning and development
- A physical space for meeting
- A meeting for info place
- Spaces for literacy and learning
- An extraordinary public library
- An important resource for all aspects of life
- A reliable community hub
- A free public library
- A free, safe reliable community for knowledge and resources
- The best free community service
- Solid institution and timeless
- Public
- We are a city-wide community hub of information with caring staff who want to bring information to everyone all the time
- Community hub of information
- A free open institution
- Free basic access to information, books and resources
- The OPL is a public library that provides free services to Ottawa residents at 33 branches and book mobile. It is funded by municipal taxes and is always open online.
- Public library

- North America's largest FR/EN bilingual library system
- OPL is the only cultural institution that promotes a vast amount of training/learning opportunities to internal and external stakeholders
- Community resource
- Self improvement/fulfillment
- A bilingual community service space in literacy
- We are a place (physical & virtual) where we can come together to learn and connect
- Ottawa's home for literacy
- We're more than just a place for books, we're a destination for discovery, inspiration and connection.
- Space to discover
- Reliable resource
- Long established (Original Carnegie bldg 1904 – main, 1860 – Vernon)
- Help without judgment
- A place where you can be free to express yourself by reading and learning what you want

How we do it

- Through our corrections, services, programs, spaces and staff expertise
- Biggest bilingual library institution in Canada
- A free safe service
- We are free and local
- Bilingual collections and services
- Geographically diverse
- OPL is the only place you will find a hugely diverse group of people sharing resources
- Friendly and inclusive staff will do their best to help and support
- Serving and welcoming all for free
- We help people

- OPL is the community service that will bring services to you

- We are a vibrant community hub that brings people together, fosters creativity and learning and celebrates the joy of reading

- We empower with knowledge

- We bring knowledge to you, no matter who you are or where you are from

- We are free to use 24/7

- By being part of a large city

- Provides access to content, tools, activities, peace and comfort

- Professional, knowledgeable staff connecting to the community

- In person and online

- We provide access to a multitude of resources and services

- OPL is an excellent public educational centre where individuals can learn or exist in a non-judgmental community space

- Trustworthy

- Help without judgment – we judge the resources not you

- Only place with physical and online resources

- By being in your community and home

- Providing a welcoming place that houses all things literature and literacy

- Great collection

- Variety

- Passionate staff

- Vocal and deliberate

- Home away from home

- A place to get answers

- Expertise with a smile

Who we help

- Ottawans

- People looking for resources/ skills or services

- All Ottawans regardless of income or education

- English and French speaking people

- General public / Vulnerable public

- Client of all ages & Non-Users

- Everyone, access for all

- Anyone who needs help finding information or support

- An institution of intellectual freedom

- Everyone

- Caring and informative staff

- People who maybe can't afford books / resources

- Individuals who seek inspirational and inclusive spaces

- 0-99

- People who care, members of the community (you and me)

- Kids – supporters of tomorrow

- Vulnerable and marginalized

- Seniors

- Newcomers

- Groups, clubs

- Babies

Where we do it

- Through our physical and virtual delivery channels

- Throughout the city in person or online

- In our communities

- The greater Ottawa area and beyond

- Worldwide – no limits

- Ottawa, 33 branches and book mobile

Why we do it

- Channels literacy promotion for all who want it
- Because they find programs/services or digital platforms from catalogues that are useful
- Democratic access for free information
- To connect people and encourage learning
- Easy to connect/free/safe
- Free and inclusive, accessible services
- Lifelong learning and literacy, social interaction community
- Quell loneliness
- Because humans help humans. It is necessary to bridge the gap
- Information and open community spaces
- OPL is essential
- Because you need to fill a need. A need you didn't know we had
- To bring information access to everyone
- A democratic institution depends on informed citizens. As humans they are entitled to it
- Public libraries act, not everyone can afford
- Municipal funding
- To develop our community via access to entertainment, educational resources, connection
- To help people find their way
- Because we care about connecting with and supporting our community and literacy
- Right thing to do
- Inspire life-long learning
- Imagine, escape, travel, dream and understand
- Equitable opportunities
- Connects people to people
- Experience community belonging
- Quality of life for Ottawans
- Trusted information in an age of disinformation

- Escape from whatever
- To help people dream, escape, travel, understand
- To give people an equitable opportunity to enhance or improve their lives

When we do it

- Physically during open hours and anytime through collections
- Always
- 24/7
- Whenever possible
- At the time when misinformation and disinformation is prevalent in society, more people need access to free services and information than ever before
- 24/7 except on Sundays
- Time of tribalism, division and disinformation
- At the time of record inflation, our free membership helps to breakdown barriers
- When they are desperate, can't do it on their own
- When you need or want it
- Need of distraction
- Simple moments
- Learning and growth
- Throughout a lifetime
- When trying to make a change in their life or just experienced a change

Discussion "hot topics"

- Who is not coming to the library—newcomers due to language barriers and a lack of awareness; single parents or people in a lower socioeconomic bracket due to time and commuting challenges; young adults who don't realize what it offers at this age; people who are busy and content to research with a mobile device. The view from staff is that teenagers should be a key target audience because if you "get them as teens, you will have them as adults."

- Learning people's motivations and learning styles—research our demographics and get to know people to learn their motivations and if they are aware of OPL's services

- We largely assume that people know the library is free, however survey results indicate that between 7% and 27% of people did not know that the library was free from fees and fines

- Libraries as a lifeline to the world—people who don't have a computer, those who need to do their citizenship test, who need to connect to people, parents who need a break, kids who are learning and socializing, teenagers who need a place to hang out with their friends, seniors looking for companionship and to keep busy… every stage of life

Workshop Participant & Stakeholder Key Quotes

The following summarizes the main comments we heard from staff, management and the Board members we spoke to either in a workshop or in an interview about their connection and perceptions about OPL. Here is what they had to say in their own words grouped into themes based on the conversations:

OPL in the community

- "This is where everyone can come and access service equally."

- "OPL is a place we can gather and learn about other people."

- "Our community is all communities and we need to talk to all and consult with the right people to understand different perspectives."

- "Our branches are everywhere—in the city, in rural areas and they are all well run. All are welcoming and meeting needs where there are gaps."

- "Every branch is in tune to the needs of the community."

- "OPL is throughout the community. Our branches are in different locations and very unique. When you knit them together, it's great for the community."

- "The pandemic made us all realize that the library is not just about its physical resources, but the connection to people and the experience of going."

- "The suburbs don't encourage a community feel; I see OPL fulfilling this function like a European city where people come together to chat."

- "The library is a huge contributor to the community. Not everyone can afford books or the other resources that OPL offers because they are on a fixed income.

Who uses OPL

- "The majority who visit are middle to upper class, primarily children. When kids go away to school, they drop off from visiting and then hopefully they go back when they are adults and with their own children."

- "I think you tend to go to the library when you are young or when you have children. Then life gets busy and it doesn't spring to mind anymore. I think there are years when you don't go very often, but then you come back when you get older because you have some time back."

The #1 value of OPL

- "OPL's #1 value is the access to resources and other people."

- "OPL provides equal access to lifelong learning and leisure."

- "Everyone has access to a rich collection of resources and programs, while those in a lower income bracket benefit from free resources."

- "OPL is a huge benefit for those who are socially isolated like new moms, bullied kids and people who are lonely and want to make friends."

- "Access to knowledge, community and resources."

- "Access to information. You can find it all here."

- "Committed to all things literacy; people are surprised by OPL's varied collections (instruments, seeds, maker spaces, tools, etc). We never lose sight of literacy."

- "Access and beyond; access to expertise, books, referrals, belonging and literacy. We are doing skill building and helping people reach their full potential as an active participant in helping people with food, health and finances."

- "Lifelong learning and literacy knowledge— rich programming with partners to ensure people always have the chance to learn, explore and try new things."

- "It's free, everyone is equal."

- "Truly, an integrated urban, rural and suburban network of libraries. Wherever you live, you have access to vast collections of resources."

- "Our people—experts at what they do, beloved and appreciated."

Notable ways to describe OPL in one word

- "Under-appreciated; some don't see the value."

- "Conservative; not as flexible as it could be, not very playful."

- "Risk averse; guilty of watering things down and sounding robotic"

- "Humble; like Canadians, we are bad at celebrating what we are good at and feeling proud of having one of the best library systems in North America."

- "Beauty; the branches are beautiful places to visit."

- "Client-focused; accountable to users like paying customers. It is less about the transaction but more the experience."

- Dignity; no one is turned away from our doors. We respect dignity and needs."

- "Forward looking perspective"

Perceptions of OPL that need to change

- "People think OPL is for a segment of the population and not for everyone. Some think it's for rich people, others think it is for the poor. Immigrants come here and feel that the library tracks what they read so there is a mistrust."

- "Librarians and staff are seen as facilitators and not experts. This needs to change because it's not true."

- "OPL is progressive but not perceived that way. We were the first institution to offer WiFi."

- "People don't understand the services that OPL offers, the uniqueness of the branches."

- "People don't realize OPL has movies, audio books, digital resources and so much more than what they think. Marketing has a role in changing this."

- "OPL is innovative but is not seen that way, and it is frustrating. We responded to the times and were quick to respond in the pandemic. We really are leading library innovation."

- "Libraries are less quiet now, less driven by rules and offer a different environment for young people. Technology has changed the world of a library. Some still don't realize this."

Uniqueness of OPL: The differentiators

- "OPL believes in intellectual freedom. There is misinformation on the shelves but the staff gives the public the tools they need to explore and decide for themselves."

- "Every branch is different and that gives people the opportunity to explore to see what works for them."

- "Sense of belonging—this is the most important differentiator of OPL."

- "OPL is the largest bilingual system in North America. Staff have French requirements."

- "OPL's partnership with the Indigenous community is unique."

- "OPL lets people explore, trusts them to research, learn and grow, speak their minds freely and bear the consequences. Our commitment to intellectual freedom is our differentiator because we show people they can debate."

- "There's something lovely about expanding people's literacy beyond reading and writing; this is what OPL is about through the programs we offer and the access they have to hands-on programming. It's a place to come together and learn things for free."

Non-users: Reasons for not going, perceived by staff, management and the Board with input from Non-Users

- "I go to university in Ottawa so I rarely use the public library. It's not part of my routine. I'd rather stay on campus and use the resources that we have here. Our friends are the same—there is no need to go anywhere else if you can get it on campus."

- "We are retired but haven't been to the library much. We have the time now, but never really thought about seeing what they have us seniors there. We get so busy doing nothing but it's likely something we could try. We've just been weary about public spaces since the pandemic, especially ones with a lot of children."

- "There is a lack of awareness about OPL."

- "People who are racialized don't feel welcome."

- "Indigenous communities do not feel comfortable."

- "When people see OPL celebrating Christmas, it sends a message that they don't care about everyone."

- "Access and inconvenience. It depends on how close it is and the hours. It is out of OPL's control but still a factor for why people don't go."

- "New immigrants are largely not going because they don't know what OPL offers and they have technology at home. We need to do more work to get them here by packaging information together that shows our programming and how it can align with their needs."

- "It can feel intimidating. Some spaces are fancy and not everyone feels they should be there."

- "The elderly are reluctant to come now out of fear of getting sick."

- "Amazon is easy, but the library app is just as easy and free."

- "It's the age of social media when tools are at their fingertips."

- "Teenagers are hard to get here. We can do more here, but need to know how to reach them and get a sense of their needs."

- "People who are ignorant to what a library offers are not coming. People don't realize how easy it is to access services and they are not making it part of their routine."

Opportunities for OPL

- "OPL needs to be more agile by responding to news in the media. Right now, it is not quick enough to get ahead of issues. There is no culture of responding quickly and this is something that needs to change."

- "OPL needs to get out there and talk to people more, inside the library and outside. We need to socialize more and ask people if they need help, what they are looking for, and show that the staff here are experts."

- "We need to target groups more often and find out what their needs are; seniors need access to experts on technology who can show them how to use it at their own pace, we should put larger efforts on determining what services will help marginalized communities so they can make use of the library, and we need to do work to engage different cultures. Let's show them the value proposition by asking them what they need, what would attract you? We need to know the customer."

- "OPL needs to be more purposeful in engaging with the community at fairs and festivals. We need to attach ourselves to the community and be fun."

- "OPL needs to insert itself into public discourse. We are being ruined by social media and misinformation. We need to take that back and be bold."

- "PR needs to do the walking and the promotions to create greater awareness for OPL, especially when the new branch opens. This will be an exciting experience and an opportunity for us to be on the cultural map."

- "We need to advertise in our new immigrant communities. We need some champions."

- "OPL needs to be more interactive and community oriented in bringing the public into the branches. For example, do activities for the Asian community by celebrating Asian History Month, partnering with the Donut King and celebrating the Vietnamese immigrants."

- "It will be an exciting chapter for OPL when the new branch opens."

- "Going to OPL needs to be a social experience; find ways to be social like offering coffee/tea."

- "OPL needs to be laser focused on what it is doing and not water down things by trying too much. It's hard to decide where to focus. We need a cohesive vision for what we are doing since priorities change."

- "We need to think beyond cardholders and focus on the experience we offer everyone."

- "OPL has the opportunity to empower people so they can speak for themselves because they can facilitate conversations."

- "OPL is a place for connection and has the potential to maximize this strength by cultivating pathways, especially to communities who are new to Canada or the city. This is underdeveloped right now. We need to build a process framework to collaborate with immigrants in opening up dialogue. There are 50,000 new people coming to Ottawa every year and we need to work together as partners to think through resources, integrate ideas and connect more to meet the needs of our immigrant community."

- "There should be more presence of immigrant resources at OPL; let's be partners in producing literature and have OPL be a channel to provide the information and resources on housing, settlement, etc. We need to collate information and connect people to technology. It's a matter of reaching out to immigrants and working with immigrant organizations."

The brand: OPL's current positioning, personality and promise

- "OPL is not friendly and very risk averse to the point where the brand is not human or approachable. The brand is not recognizable. Ottawa Public Health has done a good job of having a human tone in its social media, sharing real-world stuff and being playful."

- "OPL could be more humanizing and less bureaucratic. They need to put the staff's faces out there since they are at the forefront; the building means nothing. It's the staff who are running the place."

- "The brand needs to express that OPL is here for everyone when they need it. Here, you can be yourself and it is free. It is relaxed and inviting. If you live here, it is yours. If you are visiting, it is yours."

- "The logo is muted. I don't think people know it. And the branches have no awareness of the link to the OPL brand. Each branch has a different vibe so they feel separate and not united."

- "The logo evokes feelings of a library of the past that doesn't exist now."

- "Showing fun should be part of our conversation. There is an intimidating feeling here now. We need to show the fun part of the library."

- "There is something for everyone here. That is an important message for people to hear."

- "It is not known. Feels too much like the city and I don't really know what it is. No one understands it and it is not on people's radar."

- "It's not memorable. It needs to be bold and show how OPL is evolving and changing, flexible and distinct from the city, but complementary."

- "OPL needs to be loud and proud, bold by showing it has always been progressive."

- "You know it's a city service by looking at the logo. The colours are the same and this still makes sense today."

- "The brand needs to communicate OPL's pillar of democracy, intellectual freedom and encourage literacy, the importance of reading."

- "There needs to be emphasis on OPL sparking imagination, curiosity and helping people follow their interests to see where it takes them."

- "This is more of a refresh of the brand and not throwing it out."

- "The tagline, 'if it's out there, it's in here' doesn't elicit emotions and can be perceived as a negative connotation (not everything out there is positive and should be in the library). It's time for a change."

- "The current logo is tied to the city but it does not have to. OPL is a separate entity. We don't want to deny the link to the city, but we don't want to feel limited. Look at Edmonton or Calgary, they are not as linked."

- "We are removing barriers to service and that's important for people to know."

- "OPL should look at the National Gallery and Museum of Nature for inspiration on the brand."

- "The brand is clearly not memorable. I had to look it up."

- "OPL should be distinct from the city but have some sort of consistency."

- "The message should focus on the experience; a place where people feel connected."

- "It's nice that it is a book, but we need to look to the future to reach a brand new audience."

- "OPL needs to be seen as cool and refreshing, never boring here."

Staff Survey Responses

1. How long have you worked at OPL?

(N = 408)

Two years or less	20%
Between two and five years	9%
Between five and 10 years	18%
More than 10 years	53%

2. What excites you most about working at OPL?

(N = 408)

Helping people find materials or information	65%
Providing a vital community service	64%
Helping people engage in learning	63%
Providing good client service	63%
Learning new things yourself	54%
Pay cheque, benefits, time-off, etc.	55%
Working closely with my colleagues	52%
Being part of a community hub	50%
Spending time with Active Users	33%
Other (please specify)	11%

3. Without looking it up, what is OPL's Mission?

(N = 335)

4. Which of the following are OPL's core values? (Check all that apply)

(N = 356)

Community	84%
Inspiration	40%
Learning	67%
Inclusion	79%
Equity	47%
Integrity	56%
Freedom	36%
Understanding	22%
Literacy	80%
Access and Inclusion	53%
Accountability	26%
Bilingualism	36%
Intellectual Freedom	84%
Dynamic Workforce	19%
Informed Community	26%
Innovation	27%
Love of Reading	37%
Right to Privacy	36%
Service Excellence	42%

5. What element of OPL's vision and mission do you feel best reflects what you do?

(N = 353)

Building community	52%
Transforming lives	29%
Inspiring learning	64%
Sparking curiosity	57%
Connecting people	53%

6. OPL's values are Community, Inclusion, Integrity, Intellectual Freedom, and Literacy. Are these values reflected in your day-to-day work?

(N = 353)

Yes	89%
No	11%

7. Who do you think benefits most from a library?

(N = 346)

Young children	67%
Newcomers and new Canadians	64%
Low-income people	63%
Retired people, seniors / older adults	58%
Parents	41%
Babies and toddlers	31%
Adults	21%
Secondary school-aged children	18%
Teens / Youth	16%

College / University students	12%
Emerging and young adults	12%
Researchers	8%
Other (please specify)	9%

8. What do you think is OPL's top benefit to its clients?

(N = 356)

It's free	85%
It's a welcoming space where people can explore and learn	62%
It has a vast number of different resources that are easy to access	55%
Library staff will help you find what you are looking for	44%
It is somewhere for people of all ages to go and connect with other people	29%
It has creative spaces that are accessible to everyone to explore	17%
The programs are amazing	15%
It's close to home	13%
Other (please specify)	4%

9. Is OPL a place to come during 'down time' in the same way a park, café, or coffee shop is?

(N = 354)

Yes	72%
No	25%

10. How would you rate the following

(N = 346)

	Poor	Somewhat Poor	Somewhat Good	Good	I don't know
The quality of service and expertise provided by staff	0%	1%	12%	89%	2%
The variety of books and other materials available to borrow	0%	2%	14%	88%	0%
The attractiveness and cleanliness of the library as space (includes public spaces and staff areas)	2%	11%	39%	51%	2%
The variety of tools offered (photocopying, printing, laser cutting, 3D printing, and more)	1%	5%	28%	69%	2%
Atmosphere at Ottawa Public Library branches	2%	7%	35%	60%	1%
The usability of the Ottawa Public Library website	5%	15%	33%	50%	2%
The usability of the Ottawa Public Library Mobile app	6%	14%	32%	33%	18%

11. What makes OPL different / stand out from a bookstore or a community or recreation centre?

(N = 318)

12. Has anyone told you why they no longer visit the library, or why they visit infrequently? If so, what reason(s) did they give?

(N = 344)

They don't realize what OPL offers	56%
Different stage of life and don't feel it's needed any longer	30%
Nobody has told me that	25%
Too busy	25%
Too far and difficult to get there	13%
There is nothing here for them anymore	8%
Other (please specify)	26%

13. What should OPL do to attract more people to the Library?

(N = 305)

14. What is one thing you'd like clients to know about Ottawa Public Library?

(N = 292)

15. Where do you currently receive information about OPL's brand / mission / vision / values?

(N = 334)

In branch—displayed in break rooms, staff areas	25%
In branch—from supervisors and managers	36%
During formal training sessions	48%
CEO emails	46%
External messaging	7%

Employee forum	31%
Internal resources – Sharepoint, Agora, etc.	72%
External resources – OPL website	48%
I don't currently receive information about our brand, mission, vision, or values	10%

16. Where do you want to receive information about our brand / mission / vision / values?

(N = 330)

In branch—displayed in break rooms, staff areas	39%
In branch—from supervisors and managers	48%
During formal training sessions	43%
CEO emails	46%
Internal resources – SharePoint, Agora, etc	71%
External messaging including the OPL website	44%
Staff forum	45%
Other (please specify)	9%

17. What name do you use when referring to Ottawa Public Library

(N = 334)

OPL	44%
The Library	25%
Ottawa Public Library	24%
I don't know	1%
Other (please specify)	6%

18. What tone do you think Ottawa Public Library should have in communications (social media, promotional materials, emails, etc.)? (Check all that apply)

(N = 335)

Interesting	76%
Inclusive	69%
Fun	68%
Helpful	67%
Knowledgeable	62%
Professional	34%
Surprising	27%
Academic	9%
Reserved	4%
Other (please specify)	13%

19. What would you like OPL's 'personality' to be?

(N = 335)

Welcoming	81%
Inclusive	61%
Informative	59%
Helpful	56%
Fun	55%
Safe	48%
Exciting	35%
Professional	27%
Surprising	22%
Plain	1%
Other (please specify)	7%

20. Would you be able to describe the OPL logo if you were asked?

(N = 335)

Yes	74%
No	26%

21. Do you feel the current OPL logo reflects the library today?

(N = 322)

Yes	50%
No	50%

22. Complete this sentence: If OPL were to design a new logo, it should be: (Check all that apply)

(N = 331)

Modern	50%
Bold	40%
Fun	41%
Reserved	3%
Quirky	13%
Minimalist	31%
Plain	4%
Exciting	30%
Other (please specify)	22%

23. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

(N = 119)

Public Survey Responses

Questions asked of all respondents

1. What is your general impression of public libraries?

(Active Users N= 17,168) (Non-Users N= 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Positive	89%	74%
Somewhat Positive	10%	21%
Somewhat Negative	0.5%	3%
Negative	0.5%	1%

2. When you hear the word 'library', what comes to mind?

(Active Users N = 15,958) (Non-Users N = 1,400)

3. Whether you've ever been to a public library or not, what do you think a public library is? A place...

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
To get books	95%	91%
To read	74%	73%
To learn things	71%	67%
To find or check information	68%	66%
To study	68%	70%
To go with your kids	63%	54%
To use the Internet and computers	61%	59%
That has programs for all ages	59%	47%
Where you can get help	49%	42%
Where you need to be quiet	47%	55%
To be creative	29%	28%
To meet people and socialize	23%	20%
Other (please specify)	9%	7%

4. Who do you think benefits most from a public library?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Young children	58%	55%
People with a low income	58%	58%
Retired people, seniors	56%	54%
Students	52%	60%
Newcomers and new Canadians	46%	46%
Adults	41%	40%
Parents	41%	38%
Youth and teens	39%	40%
Babies and toddlers	19%	17%
Other (please specify)	7%	7%

5. Where have you heard about Ottawa Public Library?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Friends / Family	49%	42%
Web search	36%	22%
Social media	29%	29%
School	19%	18%
Community group	18%	16%
I don't hear anything about Ottawa Public Library	15%	22%
Newspaper	12%	12%
Newsletter / Blog	12%	9%
Radio	9%	8%
TV	5%	7%
Other (please specify)	14%	12%

6. Which of the above is the logo of Ottawa Public Library? (Select all that apply)

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
	63%	51%
	30%	19%
	27%	29%
	10%	5%
	6%	9%
	4%	4%
I don't know	5%	16%

7. Here are the current logos of Ottawa Public Library. What do they say to you about Ottawa Public Library?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

8. "If it's out there, it's in here" Have you seen or heard this slogan before?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Yes	45%	24%
No	47%	65%
I don't know	7%	10%

9. What does this slogan say to you about Ottawa Public Library?

(Active Users N = 14,532) (Non-Users N = 1,270)

10. Did you know that the collections and programs at Ottawa Public Library are free?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Yes	93%	76%
No	7%	24%

11. Did you know Ottawa Public Library does not charge late fees when books or other materials are not returned on time?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Yes	62%	21%
No	27%	67%
Yes, but I had forgotten	11%	12%

12. Do you trust OPL to...

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

Active Users	Yes	No	I don't know
Be transparent about its decisions and operations	65%	5%	30%
Play an active part in the community	85%	4%	11%
Respect your choice of reading material	90%	3%	8%
Help kids learn and grow	92%	2%	6%
Welcome and provide a space to everyone in the community	93%	3%	4%
Foster literacy and a love of reading	94%	2%	4%

Non-Users	Yes	No	I don't know
Be transparent about its decisions and operations	60%	6%	33%
Play an active part in the community	76%	5%	18%
Respect your choice of reading material	83%	4%	13%
Help kids learn and grow	87%	4%	9%
Welcome and provide a space to everyone in the community	88%	3%	9%
Foster literacy and a love of reading	89%	3%	8%

13. Do you know where your local branch of Ottawa Public Library is?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Yes	99%	87%
No	1%	13%

14. How should Ottawa Public Library make you feel?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Comfortable	80%	76%
Part of the neighbourhood/city	72%	68%
Relaxed	64%	63%
Curious	63%	60%
Respected	57%	53%
Inspired	55%	56%
Happy	47%	41%
Grateful	42%	34%
Excited	34%	31%
Intelligent	33%	33%
Other (please specify)	7%	6%

15. Listed below are some current Ottawa Public Library services and reasons people use Ottawa Public Library. Which of these were you already aware of?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks books	85%	69%
Borrow print books and books on CD	83%	74%
Borrow movies and TV shows (on DVD and streaming)	79%	63%
Bring children to events and learning programs	74%	62%
Borrow music (CDs or streaming)	73%	55%
Attend events and learning programs	66%	50%
Borrow access passes to museums, parks, ski trails, etc.	59%	36%
Suggest books the library should offer in its collection	53%	35%
Rent library meeting rooms	51%	37%
Use online learning tools and databases	50%	43%
Borrow video games	47%	33%
Borrow musical instruments	29%	14%
Borrow book club kits and bundles of pre-selected children's books	27%	15%
Use the mobile printing service	25%	20%
Use or learn to use creative tools (sewing machines, 3D printers, music editing station, laser cutters, etc.)	22%	14%
Book a one-on-one consultation with a staff member	15%	10%
Borrow specialty items, such as carbon dioxide monitors and thermal cameras	13%	8%
Watch recorded library events on the Ottawa Public Library YouTube channel	9%	9%
Borrow telescopes	9%	4%
Use a digitization and conversion lab to digitize VHS cassette tapes, 8mm, and Super 8mm film	8%	6%

16. What name do you use when referring to Ottawa Public Library?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507)

	Active Users	Non-Users
The Library	75%	66%
Ottawa Public Library	40%	43%
OPL	24%	14%
I don't know	1%	3%
Other (please specify)	3%	3%

(Active Users N = 1,055) (Non-Users N = 57)

	Active Users	Non-Users
The Library	72%	66%
Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa	40%	40%
BPO	14%	16%
Je ne sais pas	0%	4%
Autre (veuillez préciser)	5%	2%

17. Do you have a Library card for Ottawa Public Library?

(Active Users N = 17,168) (Non-Users N = 1,507

	Active Users	Non-Users
Yes	97%	72%
No	1%	26%
We share a card in our home	2%	2%

18. Have you used Ottawa Public Library in-person or online in the past year?

(Active Users N = 00) (Non-Users N = 00)

Questions asked only of Active Users

1. How often do you use Ottawa Public Library?

(N = 16,925)

More than once a week	14%
Every week	21%
Every two weeks	17%
Every three weeks	10%
Once a month	18%
Every two months	7%
Less often than every two months	13%

2. Would you consider Ottawa Public Library as a place to:

(N = 16,925)

	Yes	No	Does not apply to me
Get answers to questions	73%	17%	11%
Sit and relax	70%	19%	11%
Find leisure and cultural activities	57%	27%	16%
Study	57%	9%	34%
Have a meeting	39%	33%	28%
Collaborate with a group of people	38%	34%	28%
People watch	30%	46%	24%
Find activities and material for my children	50%	5%	45%
Meet new people	25%	53%	22%
Hang out with friends	19%	56%	26%
Get homework help	22%	19%	58%

3. How would you rate the following:

(N = 16,925)

	Good	Somewhat Good	Somewhat Poor	Poor	Does not apply to me
Quality of service provided by staff	81%	11%	2%	1%	5%
Cleanliness of branches	78%	14%	2%	1%	4%
Variety of materials available to borrow	68%	24%	4%	1%	3%
Ottawa Public Library website	63%	27%	4%	1%	5%
Atmosphere or vibe at branches	65%	23%	4%	1%	6%
Spaces to use at library branches (meeting rooms, study desks, reading chairs, children's spaces, teen spaces, etc.)	44%	21%	4%	1%	29%
Variety of programs and events	39%	24%	5%	1%	31%
Ottawa Public Library mobile app	39%	17%	3%	2%	39%
Mobile services such as homebound, bookmobile, and kiosks (lockers, vending machine)	19%	8%	2%	1%	70%

4. What do you like and value most about Ottawa Public Library?

(N = 14,280)

5. What are your favourite things about Ottawa Public Library?

(N = 16,925)

It's free	87%
The wide variety of books and other items to borrow	77%
Open to everyone	68%
Convenient location	64%
Online services	54%
It's quiet	44%
An organization I can trust	43%
Help is available	41%
I can learn new things	37%
It makes me feel like I'm a part of the community	36%
I can find something new or surprising to me	35%
A place I can spend time	33%
Interesting events and programs	22%
It's full of life	12%
I can be around other people	10%
Interacting with others	8%
Other (please specify)	4%

6. Do you recommend Ottawa Public Library to friends and family?

(N = 16,925)

Yes	95%
No	3%
I don't know	2%

7. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

(N = 16,925)

Yes	26%
No	74%

Questions asked only of Non-Users

1. How do you remember feeling when you went to a public library?

(N = 1,465)

Relaxed	49%
Peaceful	40%
Curious	40%
Happy	38%
Excited	26%
Overwhelmed	9%
I don't remember it at all	8%
Confused	7%
Frustrated	6%
Stressed	4%
Afraid	2%
I've never been to a public library	2%
Other (please specify)	7%

2. Why?

(N = 1,040)

3. How many years has it been since you used Ottawa Public Library in person or online?

(N = 1,465)

More than one year	34%
More than two years	27%
More than five years	15%
More than ten years	14%
I've never used Ottawa Public Library	9%

4. Why do you not use Ottawa Public Library now?

(N = 1,465)

Not top of mind	27%
I am too busy	25%
I buy books instead	25%
I don't need access to the Internet or other online services	16%
I don't know	15%
Too far away	13%
I don't have time to read or research	11%
Transit issues	9%
The hours don't work for me	8%
It doesn't have what I need	7%
I didn't like the service when I went before	3%
I don't like the website	3%
Accessibility concerns	3%
I don't like to read	2%
I don't like the app	2%
I think it's boring	1%
Language barrier	1%
Other (please specify)	36%

5. Where do you get your reading material?

(N = 1,466)

Internet	74%
Book Stores	56%
News Media	32%
Social Media	30%
Work	16%
School	11%
Other (please specify)	21%

6. Where do you get more information on topics that interest you?

(N = 1,465)

Internet	89%
Social media	40%
News media	39%
Book stores	31%
Work	13%
School	9%
Other (please specify)	6%

7. Do you think Ottawa Public Library is a place to go during 'down time' in the same way a park or coffee shop is?

(N = 1,465)

Yes	64%
No (please explain)	36%

8. If you use places other than the library for study, work, information, or leisure, why do you choose them and not Ottawa Public Library?

(N = 964)

9. I would use Ottawa Public Library if:

(N =1,006)

10. Do you consider the public library important to the community?

(N = 1,465)

Yes	93%
No	3%
I don't know	4%

Demographics Questions

1. What are the first three (3) digits of your postal code?

(Active Users N = 16,800) (Non-Users N = 1,443)

	Active Users	Non-Users
K1S	6%	4%
K0A	5%	4%
K2J	5%	7%
K4A	4%	3%
K1C	4%	3%
K1G	4%	3%
K1V	4%	5%
K2G	4%	4%
K1Y	4%	3%
K1K	3%	3%
K1J	3%	3%
K1N	3%	4%
K2P	3%	–
K2B	3%	4%
K1T	3%	3%
K1R	3%	4%
K2H	3%	3%
K2S	3%	2%
K1Z	3%	2%
K2K	3%	–
K2C	–	4%
I don't live in Ottawa, but I have an Ottawa Public Library card	–	4%

2. What is your age?

(Active Users N = 16,745) (Non-Users N = 1,438)

	Active Users	Non-Users
15-19	2%	2%
20-34	19%	23%
35-49	28%	25%
50-64	22%	27%
65+	27%	21%
Prefer not to answer	2%	2%

3. How long have you lived in Ottawa?

(Active Users N = 16,739) (Non-Users N = 1,432)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Less than one year	2%	3%
1 – 2 years	5%	4%
3 – 5 years	8%	7%
6 – 10 years	10%	10%
11 years+	52%	47%
I've always lived in Ottawa	22%	25%
Prefer not to answer	2%	4%

4. Does your household have anychildren under 18?

(Active Users N = 16,740) (Non-Users N = 1,431)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Yes	31%	25%
No	67%	73%
Prefer not to answer	2%	3%

5. Which of the following is the highest level of education you have achieved?

(Active Users N = 16,753) (Non-Users N = 1,435)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Some high school	1%	1%
Completed high school	3%	5%
Some college	3%	6%
Completed college/CEGEP	10%	17%
Some university	6%	9%
Completed university	34%	31%
Some graduate studies	7%	5%
Completed graduate studies	32%	22%
Prefer not to answer	2%	3%

6. How do you identify?

(Active Users N = 16,702) (Non-Users N = 1,435)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Female	70%	66%
Male	26%	29%
Prefer not to answer	3%	3%
Non-binary	2%	3%
Neither	0%	0%

7. Do you identify as someone in the following equity-deserving group(s)?

(Active Users N = 15,179) (Non-Users N = 1,303)

	Active Users	Non-Users
Not applicable	26%	25%
Older adult	26%	22%
Francophones	13%	11%
Immigrant	13%	13%
2SLGBTQIA+	9%	13%
Racialized person	8%	11%
Person with disability	8%	14%
Prefer not to answer	8%	9%
Rural resident	4%	5%
Aboriginal Peoples	4%	4%
Person living in poverty	2%	4%
Other (please specify)	3%	4%

8. Which social media platforms do you use?

(Active Users N = 16,665) (Non-Users N = 1,429)

Active Users	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less than monthly	I don't use it
Mastodon	2%	1%	2%	2%	93%
Twitch	2%	2%	2%	4%	90%
Threads	2%	2%	3%	4%	89%
Snapchat	5%	4%	2%	5%	83%
TikTok	9%	5%	3%	4%	79%
Pinterest	6%	10%	10%	19%	55%
X (formerly known as twitter)	12%	8%	5%	9%	66%
Reddit	11%	9%	7%	13%	59%
LinkedIn	8%	12%	11%	18%	51%
Instagram	37%	11%	4%	8%	39%
Facebook	46%	16%	6%	8%	24%
Youtube	35%	28%	14%	14%	9%

Active Users	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Less than monthly	I don't use it
Mastodon	2%	2%	2%	2%	93%
Twitch	2%	2%	3%	6%	87%
Threads	3%	4%	3%	4%	87%
Snapchat	7%	6%	2%	6%	79%
TikTok	13%	6%	4%	6%	71%
Pinterest	5%	12%	10%	18%	54%
X (formerly known as twitter)	13%	11%	5%	10%	61%
Reddit	12%	9%	7%	16%	56%
LinkedIn	8%	14%	12%	17%	50%
Instagram	43%	11%	6%	8%	32%
Facebook	52%	14%	6%	6%	22%
Youtube	38%	28%	13%	13%	9%